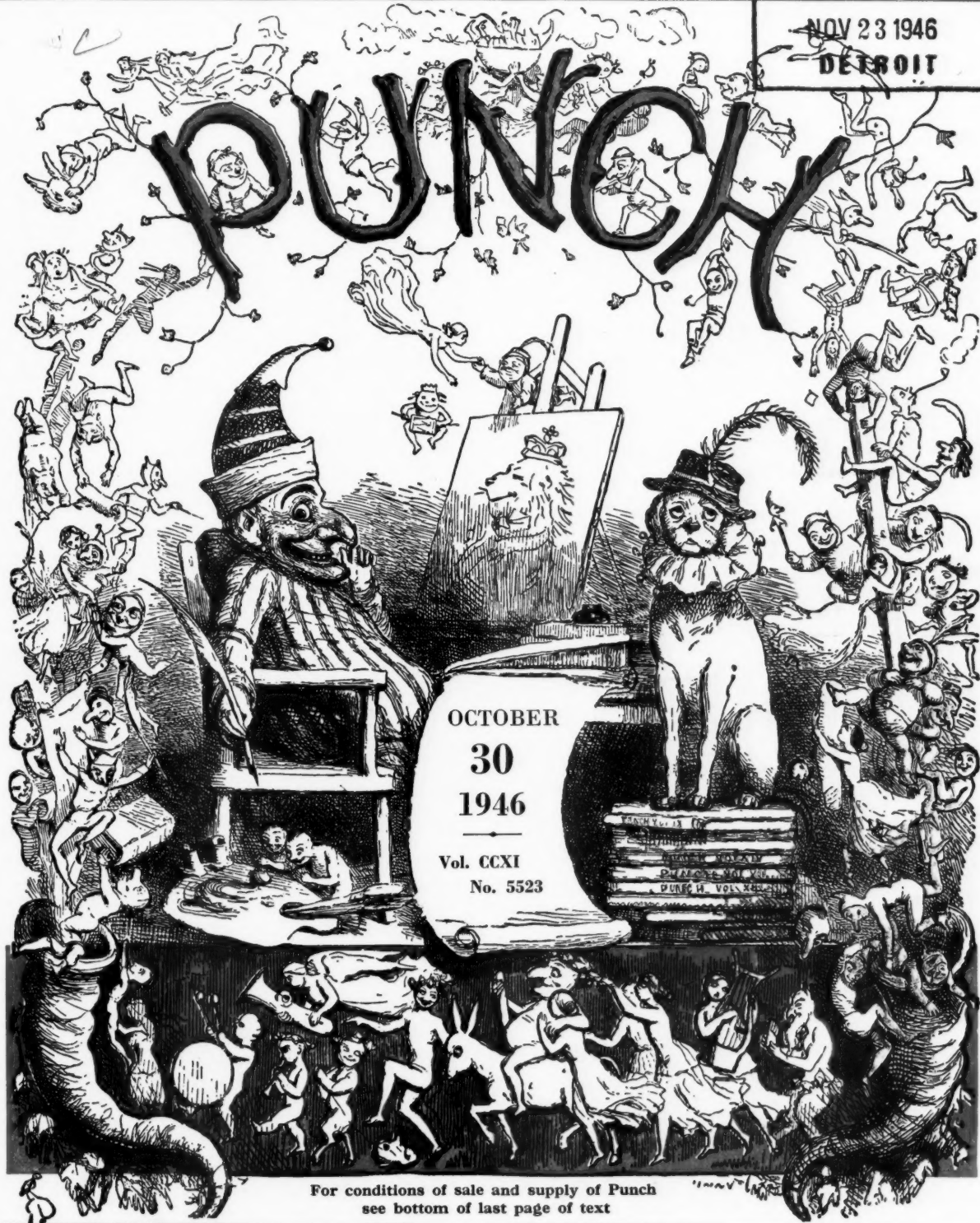


Huntley & Palmers *the first name you think of in* Biscuits

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DETROIT



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Sundour

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P N12

We build in steel



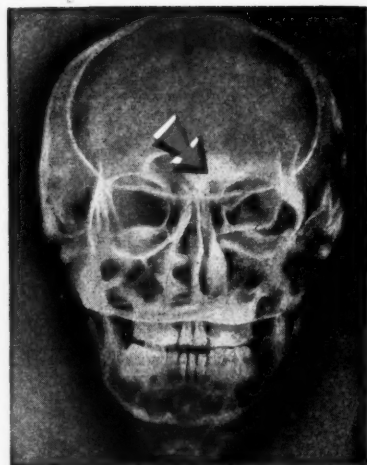
To make sure that things are done at the right time, at the right place, and in the right order is the basis of all good building. Call it planning if you will; we engineers think of it as plain common sense.

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Portrait of a splitting headache



A generation ago, Kodak paved the way for modern radiography by introducing X-ray film. Since then it has been largely Kodak research which has raised X-ray film to its present speed and accuracy. The advances made possible by radiography in diagnosis, surgery and dentistry—the number of pains it has ended—the number of lives it has saved—are beyond calculation. Radiography is but one of countless and varied fields—from science to snapshots—in which Kodak research and materials have made progress possible.

In the original X-ray film, the radiologist immediately saw the cloudy frontal sinus—the light area above and to the right of the nose. Infections of the sinuses are one cause of splitting headaches readily discernible by radiography.

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For Ladies' 'SHOES' by 'SHOES' & 'SHOES', Manchester, call for the 'SHOES' brand



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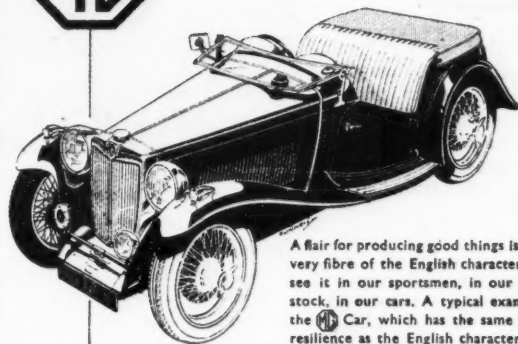
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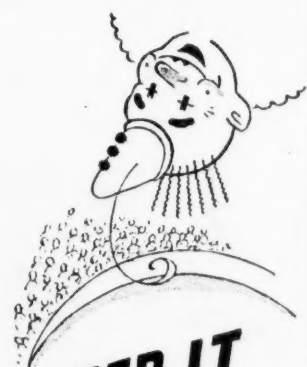


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DOWN,
CLOWN**

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Cream & Viola
MASTERS THE HAIR

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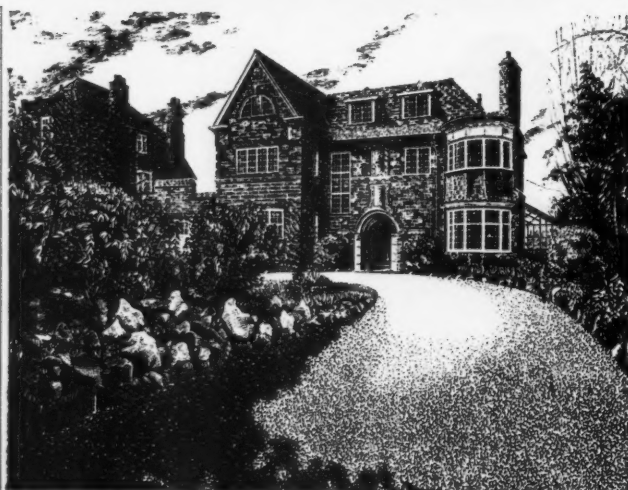
PRINTED FOR THE
BREWERS' SOCIETY



BULL AND MOUTH

FAMOUS victories were often perpetuated on the signs of inns — though the lively fancy of the sign-painter sometimes out-ran his learning! Thus the Bull and Mouth is a likely corruption of "Boulogne Mouth", where Henry VIII's forces met with some success. Again, the Bull and Gate may originally have been the "Boulogne Gates" which Henry ordered to be taken to Kent. We may be sure that victories of our own times will find place on the inn signs of the future; and that in the new inns, men of Alamein and the Battle of Britain will meet as did their forefathers, in peace and good fellowship.

Engraving specially designed by John Farleigh



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Howard Baker, Esq.

Summer heat or winter cold cannot affect paths and drives surfaced with COLAS. Easy to apply, quick to set, COLAS produces a smooth, dust-free surface which will last for years without attention. Skilled labour or special equipment are not needed—a gardener can do the whole job, or our agents will submit, free of charge, estimates for carrying out work by contract if desired.

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Colas Products, Ltd., 5-6, Crosby Sq.,
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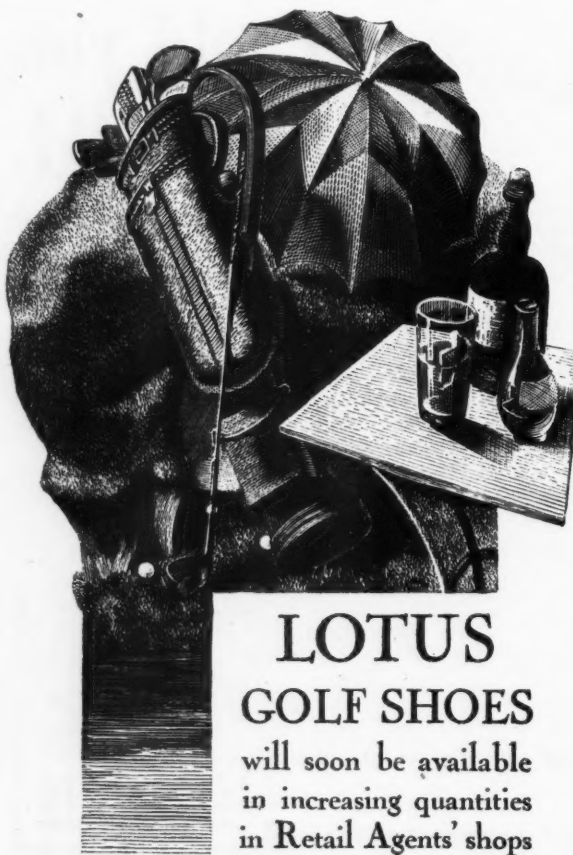
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will soon be available
in increasing quantities
in Retail Agents' shops

Great
Scotch!

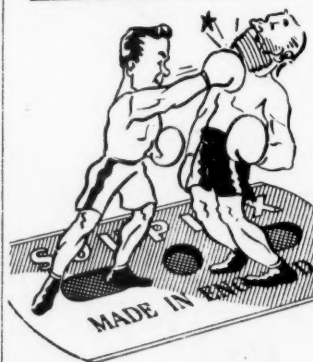


OLD ANGUS

A NOBLE SCOTCH
Gentle as a Lamb

OA9d

To **RAZOR** smile

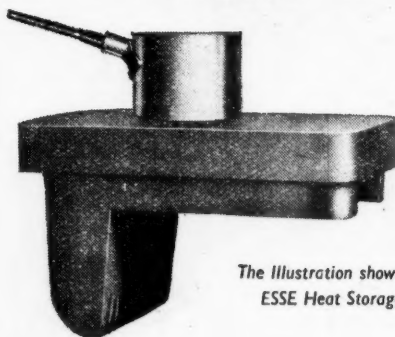


**"RIGHT ON
THE CHIN"**

A sure guard . . . straight
approach, smooth easy
action, beating all rough
stuff.

Double Six
BLADES
MANUFACTURED BY
SOUPLEX LTD., MORECAMBE

The ESSE Heat Storage Hotplate



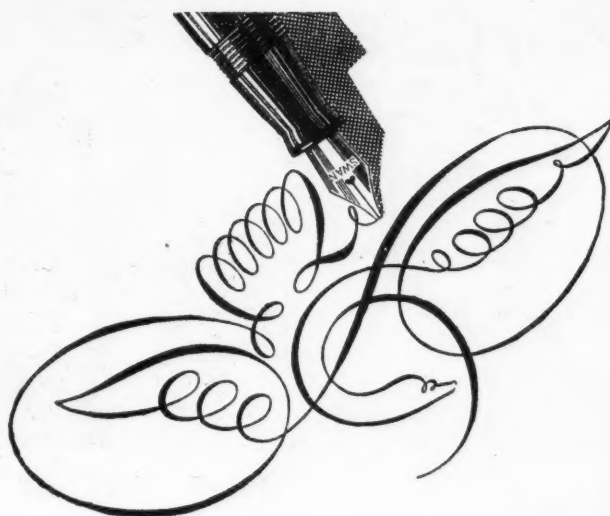
The illustration shows the massive ESSE Heat Storage Hotplate

THIS IS
THE MEANING OF
HEAT STORAGE
COOKING

The extended tongue is in contact with the small, continuously-burning fire, directing and storing heat within the massive hotplate body. The ESSE Heat Storage Cooker itself, and the hotplate when not in use, is sealed by thick insulation. Thus fuel bills are cut, and the cooker is ready for instant use 24 hours a day. Fuel: anthracite, Phurnacite, or coke.

ESSE HEAT STORAGE COOKERS

THE ESSE COOKER CO. (Props.: SMITH & WELLSTOOD, LTD. EST. 1854)
Head Office and Works: London Showrooms and Advisory Dept.:
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you'll catch them in flight
with a smooth-flowing Swan
in your hand when you write.*



Petrole Hahn
FOR THE HAIR
A perfect dressing and a sovereign specific against falling hair, scurf and dandruff. Promotes hair growth. Invigorates the scalp. Petrole Hahn is non-inflammable.
5/- and 7/6 per bottle (including Tax)
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"NO PASS—NO FEE."
Details are given of over 150 Diploma Courses in all Branches of Civil, Mech., Elec., Motor, Aero, Radio-Television and Production Engineering, Training, Building, Govt. Employment, Plastics, Matriculation, etc. Think of the future and send for your copy at once.—**FREE.**
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This cash sum, or if you prefer it, a pension of £400 a year guaranteed for life from age 55, will secure your independence in later years. If you are, say, a teacher, civil servant, etc., it will **augment the pension you already look forward to.** Take, for example, ages up to 45, this is how the plan operates—for women it is slightly varied. You make agreed regular monthly, quarterly or yearly payments to the Sun Life of Canada—the great annuity Company—and at age 55 you will receive £6,530, plus accumulated dividends—or £400 a year for life. If you are over 45 the benefits are available at a later age.

£5,000 for Your Family.

Whilst building up this retirement fund

By filling up and sending the enquiry form you can obtain details suited to your personal requirements. The plan covers all amounts of savings from as little as £1 per month and the cash and pension can be arranged in most cases to commence either at age 50, 55, 60 or 65. It is the safest and most profitable way of providing financially for you and yours, and the protection for your family starts from your first payment.

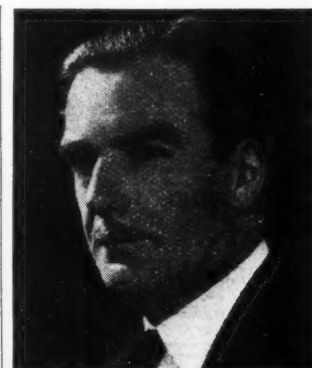
or pension your family is provided for. Should you not live to reap the reward yourself your family will receive £5,000, even if you live to make only one payment.

Income-Tax Saved.

On every payment you make, you receive the appropriate rebate of income-tax—a concession which will save you a considerable sum during the period.

£691,103,000 Assurances in Force.

Through the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada (the largest Company of the British Empire transacting Life Assurance solely) over 1,000,000 men and women have provided for themselves or their families by policies guaranteeing the payment to them of £691,103,000.



Mr. ANTHONY EDEN

writes:

"Medical Science and skill are employing every weapon in their power to combat this dread disease. But it is to us they turn for the necessary funds to help relieve the terrible sufferings of thousands of human beings. Our contributions will further research which will one day doubtless find a cure for cancer. Every penny we can spare brings that day nearer."

**The Royal
Cancer
Hospital**

FULHAM ROAD, LONDON, S.W.3

FILL IN THIS FORM NOW POSTAGE ONE PENNY IF UNSEALED

To H. O. LEACH (General Manager for British Isles).

SUN LIFE ASSURANCE CO. OF CANADA

(Incorporated in Canada in 1865 as a Limited Company),

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I should like to know more about your Plan, as advertised, without incurring any obligation.

NAME

(Mr., Mrs., or Miss)

ADDRESS

Occupation

Exact date of birth

Punch, Oct. 30, 1946

*Cow & Gate?—
of course*



"What is Mummy busy with over there? I know! My COW & GATE—Goody!"

It is a happy fact that babies do love Cow & Gate. It builds fine specimens of healthy, happy childhood.

Be wise—do not take a chance with such a vital thing as your baby's food. Cow & Gate Milk Food is the best substitute when natural feeding fails.

3829

COW & GATE MILK FOOD

The FOOD of ROYAL BABIES

SPILLERS SPILLERS SPILLERS SPILLERS

EAT

TUROC

BROWN BREAD

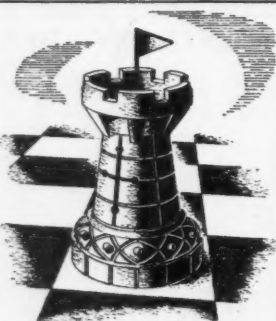
DAILY—

A SPLENDID

AID TO

VIGOROUS HEALTH

Difficulty with supplies? Then write to—
SPILLERS LTD., 40 ST. MARY AXE, E.C.



A Favourite Ally!

SENIOR'S
FISH & MEAT PASTES



**Pack full of
CRANFORD**

Packed in a satchel of pink and gold
and brown, gaily wrapped for perfect freshness,
Caley Cranford (ten delicious centres!)
are in the shops now.

CALEY CRANFORD

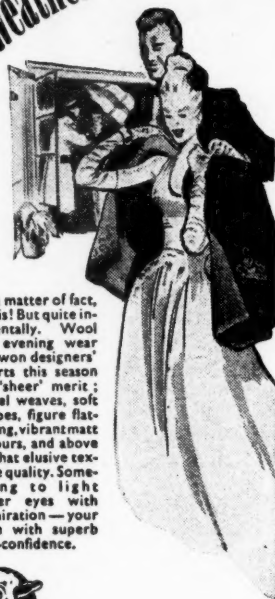
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*Famous for Fine
Quality*



LIMITED SUPPLIES
FROM
FAMILY GROCERS

Weather wise?



As a matter of fact, she is! But quite incidentally. Wool for evening wear has won designers' hearts this season on 'sheer' merit: novel weaves, soft drapes, figure flatterer, vibrant matt colours, and above all that elusive texture quality. Something to light other eyes with admiration—your own with superb self-confidence.



Right from the start
WOOL this Winter

Issued by the
International Wool Secretariat.

G.134

Stairs Blazing!

BUT ESCAPE CERTAIN

for entire Family even from highest floor if Automatic DAVY is fitted. Average cost £10.

Write for details.

JOHN KERR & CO. (Mkrs) LTD.
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DAVY Automatic FIRE ESCAPE

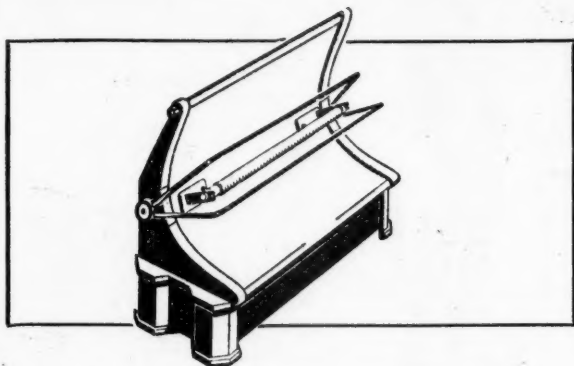


*Indigestion?
Ah, Yes!*

— YOU WANT

MEGGESON
BISMUTH DYSPEPSIA
TABLETS

16
310



*you need a new fire
but*

take care of your old one, for it may be a little while before you can buy a new Graham-Farish fire. Supplies are still *very* limited. This model is the 'Swift' (fitted with polished aluminium reflector) and costs only 23/6. Ask your retailer to put you on his waiting list now.

GRAHAM-FARISH

Portable Electric Fires

Graham-Farish Ltd., Bromley, Kent. Branches at Perry Road, Park Row, Bristol 2, and 9 South King Street, Deansgate, Manchester.

CVS-19

to guard her food we'll need
a 'frige'



Prestcold
WILL MAKE
Refrigeration

AN EVERY-HOUSEHOLD WORD



A PRODUCT OF THE PRESSED STEEL CO., LTD., COWLEY, OXFORD

CHAPLINS



CELESTA

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SHERRY

Per 16/6 Bottle

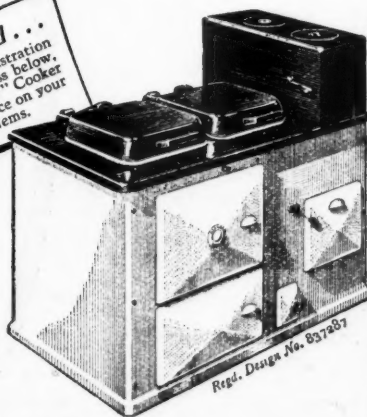
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CHAPLINS  ESTD. 1867

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- Cooking and Water Heating Combined in one unit.
- Big Fuel Economy Ensured through automatic fuel feed.
- Food Values Are Retained by balanced distribution of heat.
- High Temperatures Are Available at a moment's notice.

You Are Invited...
to visit the Demonstration
Kitchen at the address below,
and see how the "AB" Cooker
works—also get advice on your
cooking problems.



Regd. Design No. 837287



Write for Illustrated Brochure to:
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COMBINING COOKING & WATER-HEATING

(Controlled by Federated Foundries Limited.)



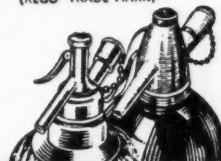
Dash! OUT OF SODA AGAIN!

What a boon it will be when
Sparklets Syphons and Bulbs are
again obtainable.

There are prospects of better supplies
in the near future and you will soon
be able to make at home the purest,
freshest "soda" that ever sparkled
up a drink.

Sparklets

(REGD. TRADE MARK)



HYGIENIC—CONVENIENT—ECONOMICAL

ESTB. 1742

WHITBREAD

& Co. LTD.

*Brewers
of ale and stout
for over two centuries*



A Question of Taste

IN THE OLD melodramas the cynical villain usually 'puffed a cigarette', whereas the hero 'sported a pipe'.

As tobacconists to many stage celebrities, we have always maintained strict impartiality in this conflict of tastes. Our resources in fine leaf, and our finesse in blending,

enable us to cater equally for the pipe partisan and the cigarette connoisseur.

We regret that, temporarily, such pleasures must be reserved for our registered customers. But the moment that increased supplies of our blends are possible, new customers will be cordially welcome.

ROTHMAN of Pall Mall

DIRECT-TO-SMOKER SERVICE

For sure, safe, speedy relief
in all cases of Headache,
Neuralgia, Rheumatism
and all Nerve Pains

the answer is

PR

P.R. is DIFFERENT. It was evolved in the Research Laboratories of **BOOTS THE CHEMISTS**. It is a **DOUBLE-ACTION Pain Reliever**. P.R. Tablets relieve your pain — and at the same time, help to remove the **CAUSE** of your pain. Remember this, too—P.R. is **NOT A NARCOTIC!** You can take P.R. Tablets with confidence they are absolutely safe, and they do not upset the heart or stomach.

2/3½
a bottle

Sold only
at Branches
of

Boots

BB24/279



Broaching a tempting subject

To those who are sick with 'flu, biliousness or in febrile conditions—a renewed recommendation to take Lembar: it will do you good. To the rest of the community, who are mainly sick of being patient—a promise of Lembar for general consumption as soon as possible: Meanwhile, please don't broach your bottle until illness entitles you to do so.

RAYNER'S medicinal
Lembar

Available in limited
quantities

MADE BY RAYNER & COMPANY LTD., LONDON, N.11



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXI No. 5523

October 30 1946

Charivaria

We are asked to deny the report that the prisoners recently on hunger strike at Dartmoor were approached by residents of the Savoy with a view to exchanging accommodation.

Prosperity is on the way. A journalist reports that he tried every stationer in his town for economy labels and finally had to make do with envelopes.



"IRON CURTAIN ROUND GOA."
Headline in Indian paper.
A goa-constrictor?

As a result of extensive speculation on Wall Street we may soon be reading of New York newsboys who started as millionaires.

A news item mentions a married couple who quarrelled over bread rationing and separated. It is not stated which of them was given the custody of the B.U.s.

After receiving representatives of the Scotch whisky trade recently Mr. Strachey expressed every sympathy with the case presented by the deputation. It is not clear whether it contained a baker's dozen.

America now has clocks that strike when spoken to in a loud voice. And of course the cuckoo comes out in sympathy.

"REGENT PALACE: About 50 girls and men walked out. Pickets stopped a fish and a bread van."—"Daily Express."
But you should have seen the fish that got away.

A new garden tool, which is a combination of the spade, fork and rake is said to cut down the heavy work in the garden by half. We must get two.

An M.P. says it is a crime to have wasted space in any house, nowadays. The problem is, of course, what to do with the coal-cellar.

"He fought a duel with her fiancé and, to his surprise, was killed."
Book review in "Evening Standard."
Using his last breath for a long whistle of astonishment.

After a football-match in Spain the referee took refuge down a street manhole. It looks as if Spanish football fans will have to carry ferrets.



Our Relations with Foreign Correspondents Continue to be Unfriendly.

PERSISTENT readers of this paper will have noticed that we have had for some time a correspondent in America. Additional proof of the fact may be found on a later page of the present issue. But what may not be so generally known is that a network of *Punch* correspondents stretches, in the characteristic way in which network does stretch, from China to Peru.

Our Peruvian Correspondent, for instance, writes:

"The people here are markedly dolichocephalic. Like all horse-loving races they are addicted to gambling and may often be seen rolling a large oval stone, or *quiba*, into a series of trough-like depressions (*marahiti*). Considerable sums of money change hands in this way. Fish is plentiful."

We do not print this kind of stuff. Still less is it possible to make any use of the material sent in by our Central European representative, who cables a continuous stream of what are believed to be Magyar jokes. Here is a sample:

A rich nobleman was walking deep in thought along the bank of a canal, when he was accosted by an elderly pedlar who, with every circumstance of familiarity, addressed him as follows:

"Brzeska y ma velika hadju nyiryegeza bu kalocsa."

Quick as a flash came the reply:

"Pjuk? Nagy mezo y nagy Czwrka gora szcjklecz!"

When we got this we wired back straight away that it was old. "Get Hungarian reactions," we added, "to threatened cut cheese ration this country."

He replied: "URGENT. ERROR IN MINE OF 14TH STOP FOR CZWRKA READ CJZARKA STOP COLLAPSE OF ELDERLY PEDLAR FOLLOWS STOP."

This sort of thing makes a mockery of the most elaborate network. The trouble with overseas correspondents is that they get so steeped in the problems, traditions, customs,

language, wine and so on of the country they are in that they forget what is going on in their own country and what sort of information its people are likely to want. To obviate, as far as possible, the risk of this happening to our American correspondent (and the dangers of contamination are particularly great over there now that vast quantities of meat are again flooding the country), special arrangements have been made to keep him constantly in touch with the parlous state of affairs over here.

This can best be done, partly by a series of cablegrams ("NEVER MIND NYLONS STOP CAN YOU SEND COKE"), partly by ensuring that his copy of *Punch* reaches him regularly and without delay. The procedure employed to achieve this latter object may be not without interest. The first copy off the presses is taken by the fastest available means to Heathrow, where it is thrown into a waiting room already crowded to suffocation with copies of *The Times*, *Mail*, *Chronicle*, *Express*, *Herald*, *Spectator*, *New Statesman* and many other well-known publications. Complaints have been made on many occasions about the unhygienic conditions at Heathrow, but the answer given is always the same, that until more accommodation is available nothing can be done. To make matters worse, every paper, however high or low its standard and whatever shade of political opinion it may represent, is insolently labelled "Second-class reading matter" before dispatch.

So to New York. On arrival there the paper is taken, with typical American hustle, to the offices of the B.O.I. (Board of Investigation) where it is scrutinized and any offending articles or drawings stamped "Liable to offend Republican sentiment," "Unwarrantable interference in internal politics of U.S.A.," and so on, and cut out for interment on Ellis Island. What remains is rushed by train or air-taxi to the township in which our correspondent was last reported. At this stage police officers take over and, with sirens screaming, speed dizzily from one likely saloon to another. "We always," they assert, "get our man."

A curious incident that occurred in Chicago is perhaps worth noting. A rumour that our correspondent was in the famous stockyards led to the paper being delivered there instead of following its customary routine. An over-zealous minor official hung it on one of the hooks which convey hogs, on an endless belt system, to the waiting slaughtermen, and before anyone could interfere an enormous negro had cleft the paper to the chine. Anti-British sentiment, always strong in the home of Big Bill Thompson, received a fresh fillip—rather illogically, in our opinion—from the affair.

This is the sort of thing which could never happen in this country and makes one proud to be an Englishman.

But what on earth is the matter with our Siberian representative? His instructions were quite clear. He was to visit the spot where an enormous meteorite fell on June 30th 1908, and send us all the information he could gather about the event, written of course in a light and entertaining way. Plenty of human interest, and not too much about the measurements of the crater. "Get about among the people who witnessed it," he was told, "and find out what they were doing at the time."

Not a word about the meteorite has reached here so far. Instead he claims to be surrounded by wolves, and sends interminable descriptions of the ring of glowing eyes that



"You must hear Freddie's imitation of a boy scout."



RIGHT OF WAY

"Let's hope some of the others will do the same."

[Reciprocal arrangements for the abolition of visas are being made between the British and French Governments.]



"I don't care if he is the Captain, MUST he sit at our table?"

hems him in at night. "On occasions," he writes, "one, bolder than the rest, will scramble at the door of my log hut and often I cannot sleep for the pad, pad of stealthy feet in the enclosure."

Remonstrance seems to be vain. Cables urging him to "keep it light" he utterly ignores. And on one occasion, when he had been told point-blank that wolves scrambling at doors were not a fit subject for *Punch* readers, he replied that the scrambling had now stopped. "It has got in, down the chimney, I think," he wrote, "and is whining to be let out. Hoping this finds you as it leaves me, locked in the corner cupboard at present."

What is so baffling is how he manages to get these not very helpful messages out. In any case he will be a difficult man to replace.

Another joke from Hungary has just come in. It reads: First Danubian Boatman. "Skolpja?" Second Ditto. "Na. Bjwzka."

Nobody here can see much point in this. H. F. E.

This issue of *Punch*, as in previous weeks, contains extra pages in accordance with our promise to compensate readers for the pages previously lost owing to the Printing Trade dispute.

Invocation

FROM crocks that writhe 'twixt thumb
and finger
And dive to death on flag or sink,
From glass whose secret needles linger
Invisible in every chink:

From garden rakes that all-unbidden
Like venomous snakes before us rise
In grassy lairs where they lie hidden
And strike us sharp between the eyes:

From kitchen knives that turn and rend us,
From hammers that ignore the tack—
O kindly fireside gods defend us,
Lest cheek turn white and thumbnail black.

And see! upon the glowing hearth
We heap the fragrant pine and cherry,
For homely incense blue and clear:
Dear Lares, O Penates dear,
In whose warm bricken fane the merry
Haunting, birdlike cricket sings,
Save us from soulless chattels' chilly wrath,
Preserve us from the insolence of Things.

Water Music

SINCE the brawl between our local male-voice choir and the organist, who was piqued at being unable to make himself heard at our last concert, I have been astonished and a little saddened to receive so many letters from conductors of other choral societies. They all complain of a certain niminy-piminy puling that infects their choirs, and ask me how to correct it. I can best answer them by relating how I first met Alfred.

Now you must have noticed, while lying in your bath, that there is one low note, varying of course from bath to bath, that imparts a slight tremble to your shaving-mirror. You know also that when, in your bath, you sing in the key of this note, or one nearly related, you get a particularly fine orotund effect. My problem was how to get this effect out of the bath and on to the concert platform, and in solving it I owe a good deal to Alfred.

I first saw him after giving a full-throated rendering of "Only a Rose," from *The Vagabond King*. About half-way through it I noticed another voice singing with me in harmony. I thought at first it was a sort of harmonic given out by the bath or a loose fitting. I stopped and listened; the voice continued—it was a brilliant *tenore robusto*.

Then I remembered that some new people had just moved in next door, and that their bathroom window faced mine across a narrow passage. When the duet ended I climbed out of my bath and opened the window.

Alfred opened his. He was a well-built man with (as I learned later) the sensitive soul of a great artist. His boiled-lobster complexion was due to the hot water.

"Lovely drop o' singing," he beamed, nodding affably through the steam.

"Not bad," I replied, smiling. "I thought the end rather ragged though."

"I went and rallentandoed," he confessed, hanging his head and toying nervously with a sponge.

"I know. Great pity—ruined the whole thing."

He hesitated and coughed diffidently. "Could we run through it again?"

"Excellent idea!" I replied with enthusiasm. "Mind you, I've nothing against any rallentando in reason, but we must keep together. I'll beat time on the bath."

We plunged back into the water.

"That was much better," I said, when we had ended. "Did you notice the difference?"

"Yes," he said, blushing. "You're pretty hot at music, aren't you?"

"Well, I was once a conductor in a small way."

"That's just what our male-voice choir wants," he said eagerly. "I suppose you couldn't take us in hand?"

The following evening Alfred introduced me to his choir. I raised my baton, but after a few bars put it down in disgust.

"Alfred!" I exclaimed, "what's happened to your voice?"

"I dunno," he mumbled unhappily.

"It don't seem to come out now somehow."

"Disgraceful!" I fumed. "I have

no time for this sickly squawking. The whole choir is the same."

"Don't be hasty," pleaded Alfred.

"Me voice was all right in the bathroom yesterday, wasn't it?"

"In the bathroom," I said, "your voice was superb. In fact both our voices were superb."

"Then why ain't it now?"

That was the problem. I was so touched by Alfred's abject apologies that I determined to find the answer.

It was really quite simple. If you watch me closely as I mount the rostrum at our next concert you will see that I have no baton in my hand. *I conduct with a loofah.*



"Excuse me, Matron, but how long does Home-Sickness take?"



"Well, what's in the papers to-night—anything not very startling?"

Table-Talk of Amos Intolerable

XXXII

LONG ago in this series I recorded Amos's reference to his friend, alleged to be named Hamilcar Burette, who made up clues for non-existent crossword puzzles. Not until the other day did Amos mention this character again—solely, I believe, because he, Amos himself, happened to have thought of a clue to the word "never" for which he did not wish to take entire responsibility. It looks better in print, but he gave it to us orally, drawing lines in the air with his finger to indicate the blanks:

"—, —, —, —, —." (Shakespeare) (5)."

* * * * *

"Character-creation in fiction," he said once when he was talking about his novel, "is a racket. The production of a so-called 'character' is a purely mechanical process in which the reader does nearly all the work, and the writer gets all the credit."

He was momentarily hidden from me and I could not see what he was doing in the pause that followed this remark, but I am quite sure he was looking eagerly round

in the hope of finding a fiction-writer of some kind who would express annoyance. But he was evidently disappointed: there was silence. He resumed:

"I don't see why one shouldn't make something on the lines of one of those cardboard disc-indicators such as they sell for calculations of photographic exposures, or to show gardeners the right time of year for planting things, that would produce a suitable combination of characteristics quite arbitrarily—indeed I shouldn't be surprised to hear that some correspondence-school of fiction-writing has done it already."

He bent over an imaginary indicator and went through the motions of pushing round a series of concentric discs.

"Build—*stout*," he murmured, "h'm . . . hair—*thick* . . . eyes—*piercing* . . . clothes—*check suit* . . . age—h'm, er—*thirty-eight*, no, *forty-eight* . . . memory—*bad* . . . voice—*harsh* . . . accent—*Midland* . . . accent peculiarity—*can't pronounce R* . . . feet—*big, turned* (let's see, a, b, c . . .) in . . . obsession—*earth is flat* . . . taste peculiarity—*likes pepper* . . . Why," he broke off, looking up, "I can see that feller, I can hear him, I know what he *thinks*, but I don't

believe in him: he's pure cardboard. Plenty of readers will, though. They'll run their imaginations ragged for the sake of doing me a good turn. Popular fiction-writing is a gigantic confidence-trick."

"On the other hand," Amos said in this connection, "it is a fact that the reader sometimes neglects to work his imagination hard enough. I dare swear that few, other than my conscientious self . . ." He waited for applause, or (failing that) derision. Neither came, and he proceeded: ". . . have bestowed any thought on the extreme youth of the brothers Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes. I don't think any implication in the stories precludes my summing up a possible and thought-provoking picture of their early life in the indignant interchange—"

He made his voice falsetto and ejaculated: "Mike's got it." "No I haven't, Sher!"

He observed that the numerous people who utterly fail to notice slight details of spelling and punctuation sometimes, by accident, write more correctly than they know.

"It may, I agree, have been the printer who left out the hyphen," he said, "but the point is the same: a recent letter in a newspaper from somebody supporting some agitation declared with perfect and unsuspected justice

that the agitation had been started 'by a cross section of the community.'"

"Some writers," said Amos, "ought to be allowed to claim relief of income tax when a stroke of fate depreciates the value of an important item in their stock of clichés. Look, for instance, at *the gaiety of nations*. I presume everyone will agree that the coming of the atomic age has eclipsed *that*."

"I don't seem to have said anything lately," he suddenly observed, "about headlines. One of the most noticeable recent developments seems to me to be the entire divorce between the mood and feeling of the headline on the one hand and the text it refers to on the other. Of course one is aware that they are written by different hands; but it's surely a curiosity that, for instance, the headline

'X UP AGAIN TO-DAY' should now be considered the natural and even the obvious summary of the paragraph underneath that begins 'X is down to speak again to-morrow.'"

Referring to a performer in a radio play, Amos said he was "an exceedingly important and powerful personage." "Why," he amplified, "before he can broadcast he has to ask the permission of *dozens* of people."

R. M.



"They all took prizes, except my little Angelina of course."

An Innocent at Large

[Mr. Punch's special representative is spending the next few months in America to find out what is really happening over there.]

IV—Money is No Expense.

THE other night I sauntered into the outskirts of a rumpus between labour groups on 52nd Street. I made many inquiries, but nobody seemed to have the slightest idea what it was about. Perhaps I was too far from the centre of the disturbance and happened to run in the wrong direction. But the morning papers reported a fight between "commies" or "Stalinist traitors" and members of a shipping union affiliated to the American Federation of Labour (A.F.L.).

"The Commies came well prepared last night with black-jacks, bottles and iron pipe, and threw pepper . . . We will not be caught napping again." After breakfast I went out to look for souvenirs and almost immediately I found a length of rubber hose about sixty yards from the focal point of the brawl. Workmen were already using it to wash cars at a nearby garage.

I mention all this partly to demonstrate my reporting zeal and partly to introduce a subject of exceptional difficulty—America's No. 1 problem in domestic economics, her industrial relations. Americans are furious with themselves over their inability to achieve an immediate social



and economic paradise. They cannot understand their handful of shortages, cars, nylons, meat and so on, and they are amazed and a little hurt that Britain has cars and other luxuries for export. On Sunday morning in Central Park, with the squirrels prancing about my feet and murderous insects snapping at my ankles, I talked to a fellow sun-bather about the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition which has received much attention here in the press and news theatres.

"What the hell's Britain got that we haven't?" he asked.

Ignoring the touch of comedy in the question I tried to supplement Mr. Dalton's recent explanations, but my friend was not in the least comforted.

In their distress the Americans tend to blame more or less everything and everybody. One side blames the strikers, the Wagner Act (a sort of Wagner Carta of Labour), Stalin, the Office of Price Administration and the memory of the New Deal. The other side blames profiteers, black-marketeers, Stalin . . . but then, nobody seems to have more than a few toes in any one camp. To the outsider the political pattern is hopelessly confused.

Of course the workers' discontent lies rooted somewhere in the widening gap between wages and prices. Since mid-summer prices have risen sharply—butter by about 30 per cent., poultry by 50 per cent., eggs by 48 per cent., and since the reimposition of the price-ceiling meat has practically disappeared from the stores at any price. With fifty-eight million people in civilian jobs (or gainfully employed as the Board of Trade might say) labour too is scarce and its bargaining power is formidable. As always in a period of inflation the salaried classes are hardest hit. New York's teachers claim that they cannot rub along on incomes of between £600 and £1,000 a year. There is a very lively and compassionate interest in the fate of China's dollar: specimen bills of inflated currency are on exhibition.

Roth's Grill Inc. on Broadway is closed and has this notice stuck across its windows:

"This Restaurant is closed because of irresponsible elements in the labor union controlling the cooks and others in our kitchens. We have refused to be further bullied by delegates, business agents and other representatives of Local 89. A.F.L. We will reopen with a crew of men who will appreciate good wages and working conditions and who will indorse the belief that both employee and employer should work together in the American Way."

Reading this, any journalist worth his salt would have done what I did. I set myself to ferret out the details of wages and conditions at this establishment and I soon discovered* that the employees worked a 48-hour week, had two weeks' holiday a year, with pay, and two hot meals daily. Their earnings were—chef \$100 per week, cooks \$85 and \$75, butcher \$65, counter-men \$71, baker \$115. And the rate of exchange is about four dollars to the pound.

Every newspaper carries pages of advertisements offering jobs to junior typists and office boys at weekly wages of from \$24 to \$30.

Girls, with or without experience, for inserting letters in envelopes.

Apply 4th floor, 88 University Place (12 St.).

But to get these figures into perspective they must be put alongside current prices. A glass of milk or a cup of

* Though I admit that most of this was written up on another window.

tea or coffee costs sixpence; a pint of blood costs £7 10s.—“Donate blood, \$30 per pint. Write, stating phone number, height and weight.” For four or five dollars, in some restaurants, you can get a steak bigger than a man’s hand and twice as thick, but four dollars is nearly a day’s pay for many workers. Still, there are always the frankfurters or hot dogs at ten cents apiece, and they are infinitely richer in meat than anything masquerading as sausage in Britain. Indeed, the only disappointment I have experienced so far with American food is the startling tastelessness of dazzling white bread. No doubt my taste-buds have been contaminated by the passage, among other things, of time, but I cannot help feeling that it would be a mistake to revert too suddenly in Britain to the pre-war loaf. The let-down would be frightful. This compressed tissue paper or aerated chalk takes a lot of getting used to.

Tramping around and sampling one delicacy after another in the bars and drug-stores I have realized for the first time what a shock Britain’s shortages and austerity must have proved to the G.I. To be let down slowly into the pit of poverty is bad enough: to be pitchforked into it from a land flowing with ice-cream sodas and pineapple sundaes is much more painful. More than ever do I regret our English way with coffee. A temporary relaxation of our insular practice would have made such a difference in 1942. By the way, I have invented a new dish which the proprietor of my favourite drug-store has adopted enthusiastically. It consists of . . . oh, very well then. Anyway, it is called “The Slave’s Dream” and I am being paid for the idea in kind.

Thoughts of food seem to be ruining the structure of this article. Where were we? Strikes. Not all of America’s strikes are front-page news: many of them are little back-street affairs, private feuds between (say) the boss of a tailoring and pressing shop and his assistants. It takes two to make a strike. They patrol a fixed beat before the shop holding aloft their neatly printed placards which exhort the public to boycott the employer’s wares. So:

DO NOT PATRONIZE
THIS BARBER SHOP.
UNFAIR
TO ORGANIZED LABOR.

I didn’t really need a shave, but once again I was ready to make sacrifices. I stood in the shadow of a middle-weight skyscraper watching and waiting, very much as M. Georges Simenon’s Inspector Maigret has watched and waited so often, with the entire intellect at work but cunningly concealed behind a mask of indolence. The merest spark of histrionic talent is enough on such an occasion as this. I leaned against a door-post with a cigarette (and the emphasis very definitely on the “cig.”) drooping from loose lips beneath slits of eyes. You know. Well, in fifteen minutes I knew that the strikers’ beat was five yards longer on one side of the barber’s shop than the other, and the reason for this was the window of a hat shop which was being dressed by a girl of great beauty. Those five extra steps were not premeditated, merely the result of a subconscious impulse, but they were precious to me. My dash was perfectly timed and I got through without a scratch. Maybe I was overacting a bit, for the barber certainly didn’t receive me as a long-lost customer and he wasn’t very helpful when I touched upon the main inquiry.

“Why do those men outside regard you as unfair to organized labour?” I asked.

“Ask the boss.”

“But where is the boss?”

“Goene to the movies.”



And then I suddenly realized that I was getting, not a superfluous shave but a haircut of an advanced and very denuding pattern. Fortunately, New York is in the middle of an Indian summer.

HOD.

Signifying Nothing

[“Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.”—King Lear.]

NOTHING is fair and good alone;
Nothing there is to come, and nothing past.
All that we know is, nothing can be known—
The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste!
Nothing begins and nothing ends that is not paid with moan.

Praise of which I nothing know
(Or doing nothing with a deal of skill)
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow,
And nothing brings me all things. Go, live still.
There’s nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.

And having nothing, yet hath all,
Dispraise or blame; nothing but well and fair
(For nothing this wide universe I call)
I come from nothing, but from where,
Why, nothing comes amiss, so money comes withal.

As there were nothing else to say
(If there be nothing new but that which is)
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is.
But, madam, is there nothing else that we can show to-day?
The Marquis gazed a moment and nothing did he say.
God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.

J. B. N.

Our Hat

I WISH to deal with hats. The news that the millinery industry of England is setting up an information centre dedicated to a ripper understanding in woman of the siting of the toques, bonnets, saucers, snoods and beavers which will be flooding the shops (the more urgent demands of the Eskimos having been sated) about 1960—this news, I say, leaves me no choice but to record at once my regret that man should be excluded from so humané an innovation.

It is one thing to be a natural lover of hats, approaching them without prejudice, ready to give a fair trial to anything from a paper bag to a ham omelette which offers to cover the head pleasantly and with a certain style. It is quite another to put these liberal aspirations into practice. If I may refer to my own case I can only describe it as one of nothing less than tragic frustration. Take my green hat, for which at the start I had the highest hopes. The tint was a delicate blend of Dover-Calais and old nettle, the brim curled gracefully in what seemed an exquisite dihedral, and the ribbon, richly corrugated, set off the whole thing most handsomely. There was no gainsaying the fact that this hat sat bravely in the hand.

"It is umbrageous and surely a work of art," I conceded to the old hatter.

"It will look well in the country," said he, in a voice indicating that a lifetime spent in clapping felt to silly crowns had reduced the human head

for him to the status of a handy knob in a conveyor-belt.

"I propose to wear it in the town."

"Some gentlemen do," he admitted sadly, flicking a moth from the aboriginal tracts of a busby which had come in for autumn pruning.

To my simple eye it sat bravely on the head, too. In its restful shade I seemed to take on a new stature. My mouth, an orifice about which I can seldom make up my mind, looked suddenly more purposeful than it sometimes has . . .

"Should I leave it up or turn it down in front?" I asked, revolving slowly on an invisible spit.

"A matter of taste," said the hatter, putting a check cap reverently to bed.

"It must be either oke or noke?" I demanded. What I was trying to say was that there must surely be an exact optimum of stance and angle for any given hat in relation to the acreage and indentations of any given face, taking into consideration such telling factors as ear-rake, whiskers, comparative brutality and the total score in minor blemishes.

"Try it down," said the hatter. "That often lends informality."

It lent a lot more than that. It lent a strained, soppy look where before a masterful confidence had held the field. Dignity had fled. I might have been a professor of economics miserable at home.

On my way back to base friendly mirrors confirmed that I had at last

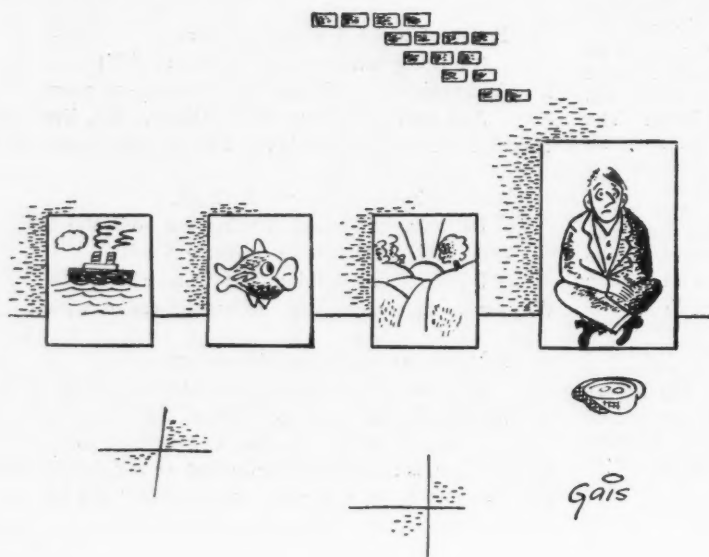
picked a winner. With sober optimism I assembled my Chiefs of Staff. They said it was a dreadful hat. They said I looked like Julius Cæsar returning from the Boat Race. They made me turn it down and then they said it didn't look so bad. In a matter of seconds they ruined my beautiful green hat for me. I have no faith in my Chiefs of Staff, indeed I would fire the lot to-morrow if I could; they are full of petty bias and ignorant of any valid æsthetic of the hat, but they ruined it all the same, for joy in a fresh hat is a tender, fragile thing, blighted at the first hint of frost. What it means in practice is that when I am feeling well and strong and not in financial difficulties I wear the brim up, though not without a small, nagging doubt in my heart; and when I am afraid of life I give in and with a sick gesture of despair I turn it down. More often than not I find myself simply carrying the hat, and soon I shall very likely make it over to the National Trust as a community-centre for paper-clips.

The case of my black hat is so similar that I need only refer to it in outline. In outline it is not unlike a gondola, riding the waves of my hair triumphantly, turned up at both ends as it is by a fine broad gunwale of black silk. Worn slightly aft, so as to deflect but not to bulge the star-board ear, it gave me a peculiar sense of power. In that hat at that angle I felt I could make and break men. But that was before my Chiefs of Staff informed me it made me look like a trader in bottomless debentures, before they obliged me to anchor it heavily down in the bows, a tactic which converts me unmistakably into a back-sliding revivalist on his way to be unfrocked.

And it was the same, only more so, with my two-peaked fishing hat, the one which was sold to me on the definite understanding that its shape would delude trout into the belief that I was going when really I was only just arriving. More so, because I have never been permitted to put this guarantee to the Test.

Any plate-glass window will tell you that men wear hats with a ghastly uncertainty. That is why I urge that a panel is overdue of experts, real artists in felt, an Academy of Hatting which would say "Yes" or "No" with authority. It would remove a deal of needless suffering from a male world brimful of it.

ERIC.





"After all, Emily, we could always alter the name."

The Man from Fort Neef

THE native driver is most helpful. Without him and his extensive knowledge I should indeed be a wanderer in a strange land. Even though my acquaintance with his language is meagre, and he doesn't speak mine, I find I can follow the general trend of his conversation, which means a whole lot.

Apprised of the primary object of my pilgrimage he readily advises me upon the best route. I can get there, it seems, either by the railway or road. If I choose the former I should make for Sahfken. But for the foreigner, unused to strange railways, it is perhaps better to go by road; and besides, he may thus see a number of the sights for which this country is justly famous. Although, he says, there is any amount of other road transport to be had, should I wish it his own vehicle, which is known as a *teksy*, and also his services as guide, are at my disposal. Warming to the idea, he says he would gladly arrange a tour through the interior embracing many of the more noted places which, if I care to sit up in front with him, he will be pleased to point out and describe. Would I not, for instance, while I am here, wish to see the famous Tah, and Ahziza Pahmun? I agree that the true pilgrim ought not

to neglect the opportunity of visiting these places, and our bargain is sealed.

I squeeze in beside him and we soon leave teeming Spankrus behind. It is not long before we reach a great bridge, known, he tells me, as Obun Vyduk, and shortly afterwards we come to a crossroads, where we turn east. This, I learn, is Luggitiw, and the huge building which now takes my eye is called Spaws. Obviously, I decide, some great native shrine. There are a number of fine buildings in this neighbourhood. He shows me Menchnahce—the home, I understand, of a certain Lawmair—and Giwdaw, the ruins of which have been partially restored.

In due course we visit the immortal Tah, by way of Tah Ril, and cross the famous bridge which bears its name, now continuing southward as far as El Ifun. Growing more confidential, my guide tells me he is actually a native of Iwfud, which lies away to the east, but some years ago he brought his family down to the south and set up his home at Fort Neef. In answer to a friendly inquiry about relatives he mentions that he has one brother who is a *levva* merchant at Wonzwuf. The bridge we are now crossing, he says,

is Wawlou. Soon we shall reach Cheng Krorce.

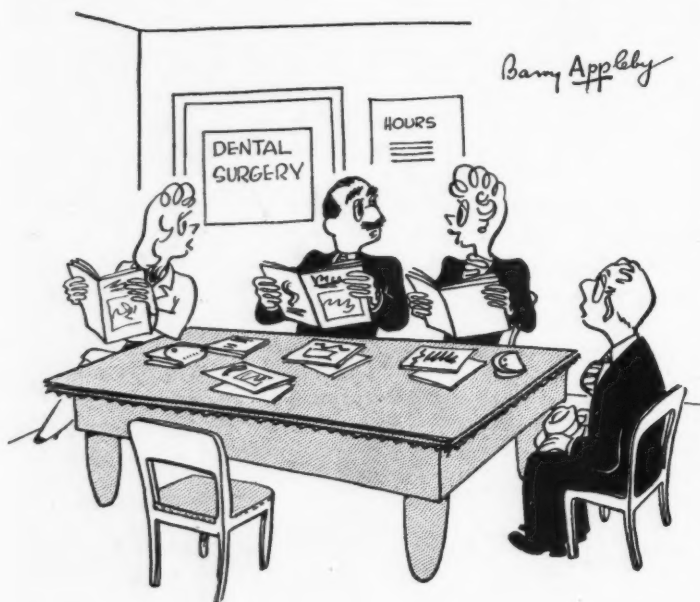
I mention that I have friends in an outlying district whom I would like to reach after the pilgrimage, and from my notebook I read out the postal address. It appears he knows the place, for it is near his old home. It is close to Lah 'Un he says, in the Epinforice territory. He suggests that I should make the journey by railway from Sahfken as far as Awgitese, where I can get road transport to Lah 'Un. Our road now follows the broad river for some distance until we reach the promised Ahziza Pahmun. At Wessmin Strabbi, at the roadside, a man is shouting wildly and I strain my ears to catch his words. "*Staw stenna nooz!*" he cries, and I turn apprehensively to my companion. "*Fubaw rizuwtz,*" he announces nonchalantly, and though this phrase is but vaguely familiar I gather that there is no cause for alarm. Some wolves, it seems, have been giving trouble in Ibri, but the *Ahsnuw*—native police, presumably—have kept them at bay.

Presently we rumble into Voxaw and turn northward. The Palace is a magnificent building, set among green lawns and trees, among which we travel along the fine Mow road until we emerge through the Amrwti arch into Tufowgaskwair, where my guide shows me the Neshnuw Gowri. We fall to talking about the pilgrimage until suddenly I gather that we are in the Schwfriji's territory and then I am craning my neck to view an imposing structure looming ahead. It is Mawblawch. We enter a broad gateway and travel along a beautiful tree-girt road, eventually emerging through another into Ipahkawnuh. It is soon after this that my companion tries to point out a notable tree, called, I think, the Bromta Norra, but it seems to be concealed behind a huge building.

We have not proceeded much farther when he brings his carriage to a halt. A great assembly of people awaits me. It is Sahfken.

I thank him profusely, and assure him the tour has been most interesting and educative, thrusting a pile of money into his hands. He brings his forefinger to his headgear in the sharp ceremonial manner and murmurs a prayer for my safe keeping. The last I see of him is his carriage rolling off on the long road to Fort Neef.

In a moment or so I have tacked myself on to the end of the queue for "Britain Can Make It."



"There's a comforting article in this magazine on why bread will never be rationed."



Efficiency Abroad

IT always is a source of deep satisfaction to an Englishman when he can observe the tentacles of his own civilization as they reach out to the far corners of the globe.

A breath of home came my way some time ago in Ceylon as I read an announcement in the paper of a dog-race meeting scheduled to take place that same afternoon. Imagine my feelings. All that stood between me and an afternoon's sport (so I thought) would be a simple inquiry as to where and at what time the meeting was to take place, the announcement having failed to supply this information.

After several fruitless attempts I rang up the sports editor of the paper in question. When I got through to his office three quarters of an hour later, the following conversation ensued:

Me. May I speak to the sports editor, please?

He. Please?

Me. The sports editor.

He. Not in, please.

Me. Can I speak to a member of his staff?

He. One moment, please. (*Excited noises off.*) What you want, please?

Me. I would like to find out where and when the dog-races announced in this morning's paper are taking place.

He. Which paper, please?

Me. The *Daily* — whose office I am ringing.

He. There are three papers published in this building. This is the Tamil Editorial Staff.

(This happened just after the publication of the *Soulbury Report*.)

Me. I see. Could you perhaps give me the necessary information so that I do not have to ring up again?

He. One moment, please. (*More feverish activity behind the scenes.*) I have told you wrong, please.

Me. You have not told me anything at all, so far.

He. Yes, it is in a different place.

Me. Can you describe the place?

He. Do you know where Bullavarayam is?

Me. No.

He. Do you know Umpumattamutti?

Me. I am a stranger in town.

He. Ah, then you will know Pellevanadyina.

Me. Not even that.

He. Do you know the Government Printing Works?

Me. No. I print my own banknotes. Tell me, is the Stadium in town or out of town?

He. One moment, please. (*The council of war once more goes into session.*) The Stadium is called The Oval, but as a matter of fact it is the Tamil Union Sports Ground.

Me. And where is it?

He. Behind the Government Printing Works.

Me. I see. What time does the first race start?

He. 2.30, please.

Me. I shall probably find it all right.

He. If you only knew Umpumattamutti or Pellevanadyina . . .

Me. Good-bye, and thank you. (*I ring off.*)

Can you wonder that I make "Do It Yourself" my motto every time? A map of Colombo was quickly procured and it took me no more than five minutes to locate the Stadium after having convinced the young woman in the shop that a map of former German colonies, even though printed on better paper, would not do. With the help of a compass (I was taking no more chances) I found the place quite easily.

In fact I would have had a most enjoyable afternoon. But unfortunately it must have been last week's paper I was looking at.



Through a Planner's Window

III—Enforcement

REBUBEN BALD BRUSH, the Director of the Central Planning Bureau, spent a great deal of his time wandering in person round the enormous blocks of offices, now darting into the Rubber Stamp Maintenance Unit to spend a few minutes at the work-tables, now looking in on the Terra-Cotta Gnomes and Garden Novelties Control Board to satisfy himself that all was well with that important undertaking. He believed in keeping his finger on every pulse of the colossal machine. And woe betide any official who was found idling! And even more woe betide anyone who was found working out of union hours!

I was not at all surprised to wake up with a start one morning to find the great man bending over me and tapping his rimless glasses on my desk. "Well, Pinwright," he said, with a kindly smile playing about his knitted silk tie, "and what are you working on now?"

"Piperack Development, sir." I explained briefly how we were co-ordinating with the Pipe-cleaner Board and preparing for a combined Export and Import Drive. I doubt if he was listening. That was not Baldbrush's way.

"Yes, yes," he said. "Well, Pinwright, I think it's time you had a

change. You're getting a bit stale: too much office work. I think you should get out and see the world for a bit. New horizons, and perhaps vistas, if we can run to it."

"Yes, sir."

"What I propose is to send you out as an Enforcement Officer. We're worried about—er—food. Your job will be to go round to restaurants and report any breaches of the regulations. You can eat as much as you like, as long as you get results. In fact the more you eat the better. What I want is results. Is that clear?"

And with a flash of the eyes he was gone.

I was not in the least surprised at all this. It was Baldbrush's policy to move people round as much as possible. On the whole I was rather pleased. I had always been fond of eating, and now for the first time I was to have a paid job which would consist of very little else. The work sounded easy enough. My main fear was that Baldbrush would transfer me to some other department before I had had time to eat myself into a stupor.

I found, however, that things were not quite so simple. It was easy enough to go into a restaurant, order the best food that austerity conditions would permit, and consume it. Any

fool, I flatter myself, could have done it. What was not quite so easy was to catch out the management in some breach of the regulations. It was extraordinary how they seemed to know me for what I was by some sort of instinct. The moment I entered their doors the commissionaire would give a sort of piercing whistle, which was followed by a confused ringing of bells at the back of the premises. When the menu was set before me, I scanned it eagerly. It usually ran something like this:

- "A. Soup (Hot or Cold).
Hors d'œuvre.
- B. Fried Plaice.
Roast Beef à l'Egyptienne.
- C. Treacle Pudding au Gratin.
Cheese and Biscuits.
Coffee.

Please note that only one each of the items marked A, B and C may be served. If the items marked B are served, then either C (or A) or A (or C) must be omitted. If items marked C are served (A), or B must be omitted (C or A) if served. Coffee is compulsory."

It was a sheer battle of wits. When the waiter came up I often ordered coffee first, then treacle pudding, finishing up with cheese and biscuits and soup, hoping to confuse the man and thus secure results. But as a rule all I actually got, after an interval of an hour and twenty minutes and a good deal of tittering behind screens, was a plate of rather leathery old macaroni cheese. On one occasion, when I got home, I found that the word "Snooper" had been chalked on my back, presumably by the head waiter.

It was all very discouraging. I tried disguises, with no better success. I even tried taking dishes from other tables and putting them on my own. On one occasion I undoubtedly did have, in a technical sense, two meat courses in front of me at one time, and was just going to speak to the manager, when one of them was snatched back by the real owner. I grew desperate.

All the time Baldbrush was clamouring for results. Eventually he delivered his ultimatum. "If you can't produce results, Pinwright," he said, "I'll find someone who can. I've a good mind to go round to some of these places myself. I'd soon have them whining for mercy." He laughed unpleasantly and made a noise with his fountain-pen which to my quickened ears



"... and I little thought when I left Shawford this morning, Mr. Roy Rich, that I would be one of the interesting people who are 'In Town To-night.'"

sounded like the clang of prison bars. It was all highly disturbing.

There was only about one restaurant in the West End that I had not yet visited. It was a little place in Soho called Cagliostro's—obscure, but with a reputation for good food. I had had my eye on it for some time, but had always refrained from going in because of the extremely menacing look of the commissionaire at the door. Now I decided to play my last card. That evening I might have been seen entering Cagliostro's with a large string bag concealed beneath my coat. It contained a complete five-course dinner done up in grease-proof paper.

The head waiter, a burly man with a heavy moustache, received me with a beaming smile, showed me to a table, and gave me a menu. I started back with scarcely concealed surprise. The menu was without any restrictions whatever! I looked round cautiously, then ordered three kinds of soup followed by two fish courses, four meat courses, ice, three kinds of savoury, cheese, and coffee. Soon the waiter came back with a heavily laden trolley. Another waiter brought up two extra tables, and in a short time I had before me possibly the largest meal I had ever seen. To make doubly sure I set out the dinner I had brought with me as well. And now came my great moment.

"I want to see the manager. I am an Enforcement Officer from the Central Planning Bureau."

Obsequiously the head waiter led me along passages to the rear of the building. Then his manner suddenly changed. Gripping me by the collar he forced me into a small steamy room. The manager stood behind a low desk, grinning evilly.

"I got him, signor!" shouted the head waiter, triumphantly.

"Look here——" I began. Then I noticed that there was a kitchen range in one corner with a huge vat of boiling water on it, and stopped, seized with foreboding.

"So," said the manager. "You are an official from the Central Planning Bureau. Good. We have been expecting you for a long time. Is the water boiling, Giuseppe?"

"Very nearly, signor."

"Good. He looks fairly tender. We shall have good food for our customers to-morrow."

The two monsters laughed, while I struggled vainly. Not the least horrifying feature of the situation was the stream of atrocious puns which now sullied the air.

"Clear snoup, eh?" said the head waiter.



"Twenty-five D.P.s from a Number 16. Manage it?"

"Enforcemeat stuffing, eh?" cracked back the manager.

The head waiter thought hard. After a long pause he said "Gooseberry Plan" in a hesitant way, but the manager did not laugh, and this made the head waiter angrier than ever. "Come, into the cauldron with him!" he shouted.

The manager was still trying to think of more puns. I saw my opportunity. In a flash I had twisted free, dived under the desk and crashed through a window into the basement. A pile of black-market brussels-sprouts broke my fall. Next moment I was running down a long alley. I heard shouts behind me and a plate of hors d'œuvre hit me in the small of the back. Then I found myself in Shaftesbury Avenue. I took a taxi and drove

straight to the Bureau, but found of course that everyone had gone home hours before.

I was back next morning with a station wagon full of strong-arm men from the Ministry of Physical Culture. But oddly enough we could find no trace of the accursed restaurant. In fact the whole lay-out of the neighbourhood seemed to have changed overnight. After a few hours' fruitless search we had to compromise by nationalizing a pin-table saloon and arresting a hair-dresser who was selling shaving-sticks made of peppermint rock without a licence. It was a disconsolate little party that returned to the Central Planning Bureau and the raised eyebrows of Reuben Baldbrush. Next day he appointed me an Assistant Inspector of Bird-baths.



"It seems such a pity they have to grow up."

The Motor Cyclist

A MURIE carl was of oure companye
That streite had ride to that hostelrye
Up-on a pulsinge engyn, lith and kene.
His handel barres were of yren shene,
And ther-on was y-set a twinned A.
Scorching he was, or pooping al the day;
And with his horne he wakned al the toun;
Was nevere tromp of half so grete a soun.
His plugges and his valves weren clene,
And on his tanke ther nas no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan he cam from his viage:
Ther nas no-wher so brave an equipage.
He coude his gadgets wel in everich cas;
Up-on his bakke mudde-garde ther was
A sete, y-wrought ful fetisly and faire,
Which that he seyde was his ladye chaire.
And through the toun so hote wolde he ride
That men y-scattered were fer and wide

To here his engyn snorten by the waye:
He was a verray hogge soth to seye.
Whan that they here his bange, and eke his
knokke,
The dokes quacke lude, the chiknes klokke,
The dogges barke on everich holt and heth;
They are a-drad of him as of the deth.
He rekked nat of any chaunce or happe.
Up-on his hede he hadde a peked cappe,
That over-heng his gogglen round and
bryghte
As is the mone up-on a frosty nighte.
Stout were his botes, and his greaves broun,
And over al he wered a gipoun.
Ther nas no man ne mighte him over-take,
And whan he rad the verray erth did shake;
Upsterte he with a rattle and a rore:
To Cantorbery went he al bi-fore.



THE OLD MAN OF THE T.U.C.

MR. ATTLEE: "Very glad to have you behind me, old boy—so long as you're going my way."

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Monday, October 21st.—House of Commons: Housing Again.

Tuesday, October 22nd.—House of Commons: World Tour.

Wednesday, October 23rd.—House of Commons: Foreign Affairs — continued.

Thursday, October 24th.—House of Commons: Army Reform.

Monday, October 21st.—After long and tedious hours spent in travelling to Westminster from their far-flung constituencies hon. Members assembled in a rather pernickety mood about the peregrinations of the railways.

"Stationmaster" ALFRED BARNES had a taste of what to expect when the railways are nationalized and the Order Paper becomes choked with the complaints of irate Members every time they miss a connection from Wick to Westminster or Penmaenmawr to Paddington.

Chief complainant to-day was Mr. CYRIL OSBORNE, who was not unnaturally perturbed over the fact that a wagon-load of barley sent across country from Louth, Lincolnshire, had been lost for sixty-six days. It was ultimately found in London within twenty-four hours of Mr. OSBORNE putting down a question to Mr. BARNES.

"That," retorted the Minister soothingly, "demonstrates the value of Parliamentary questions." Things might have been even better, suggested Major CECIL POOLE, if Mr. OSBORNE had put down his question sixty-five days earlier.

Then Mr. SKEFFINGTON-LODGE, with an aggrieved "Oh, Mr. Porter, what shall I do?" expression, asked the Minister why it was that his constituents had so much trouble on the Bedford line. Not only were the trains late in that part of the world, but they were usually far too short.

The Minister's detailed answer was a model to all those harassed souls who suffer not so gladly the insistent inquiries of truculent travellers.

All this time the eyes of hon. Members turned expectantly to the doors of the Chamber, awaiting the arrival of Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, who had proposed to ask the Prime Minister what was being done to protect the public from atom bombs. But Sir WALDRON, for once, did not

appear, and the groans from the Government benches showed unusual solicitude for the whereabouts of the hon. Member for Orpington. Mr. ATTLEE went sadly on his way without disclosing whether the Chislehurst caves could be expected to stand up to the mighty atom.

Once again it must be put on Mr. Punch's Parliamentary record that the explosive Mr. DE LA BÈRE disturbed the peace. He drew from the normally placid Mr. W. J. BROWN the *cri de cœur* that the "auditory faculties of the Members on these benches are in danger of premature shattering through the violence and vehemence of the

interest which the House felt on that subject.

But Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN drew the crowds again in time to hear a cross-talk act between the Minister and Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN, each of whom demanded to know where the rival party leaders were for such an important debate.

Despite their absence, the debate was as lively as can be expected when Mr. BEVAN takes the offensive-defensive against his critics.

Tuesday, October 22nd.—It was one of the Big Occasions in the House to-day, with the diplomatic and peers' galleries well filled to hear Mr. ERNEST

BEVIN embark on a survey of the post-war legacies left behind by the late A. Hitler. The seriousness and importance of the impending debate left its mark on the Question-hour, during which all and sundry were more than usually subdued.

The only light relief came from the ebullient Mr. DALTON, who disclosed that any future variations in income-tax levels could be put into practice in a matter of ten weeks instead of six months.

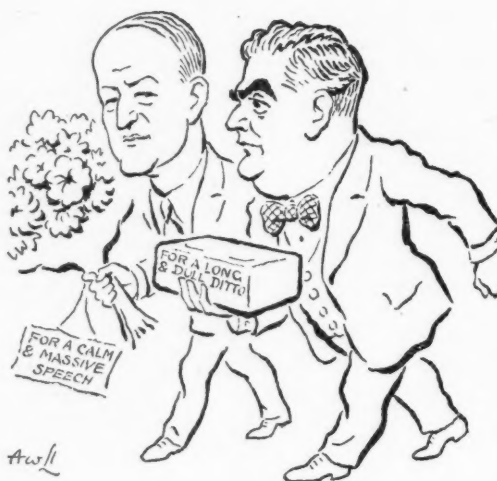
Hon. Members gasped a loud and prolonged "Oh-h-h" when the Chancellor said he was glad to announce a single *tax* system. He hastily corrected this to a single *table* system for P.A.Y.E., whereupon back-benchers relapsed into the sombre mood from which Mr. DALTON had momentarily shaken them.

The Foreign Secretary's review gave Members all too little encouragement in their search for a ray of hope on the diplomatic horizon.

As he laid out before him on the Dispatch Box a massive wad of notes more reminiscent of a Daltonian Budget speech, Members resigned themselves to an all-time record in Bevin speeches — destined to last eleven minutes short of two hours.

In the tired monotone of a man who has spent many weary months in international round-table talks, Mr. BEVIN ranged over the considerable field of desperate world problems awaiting solution.

Only one laugh from the back benches broke into the Foreign Secretary's recital—and that, to his obvious annoyance, was a sardonic laugh from a group of Labour M.P.s who disagreed with Mr. BEVIN's denial that the trade unions in Greece had been suppressed. He insisted stoutly that the ministerial



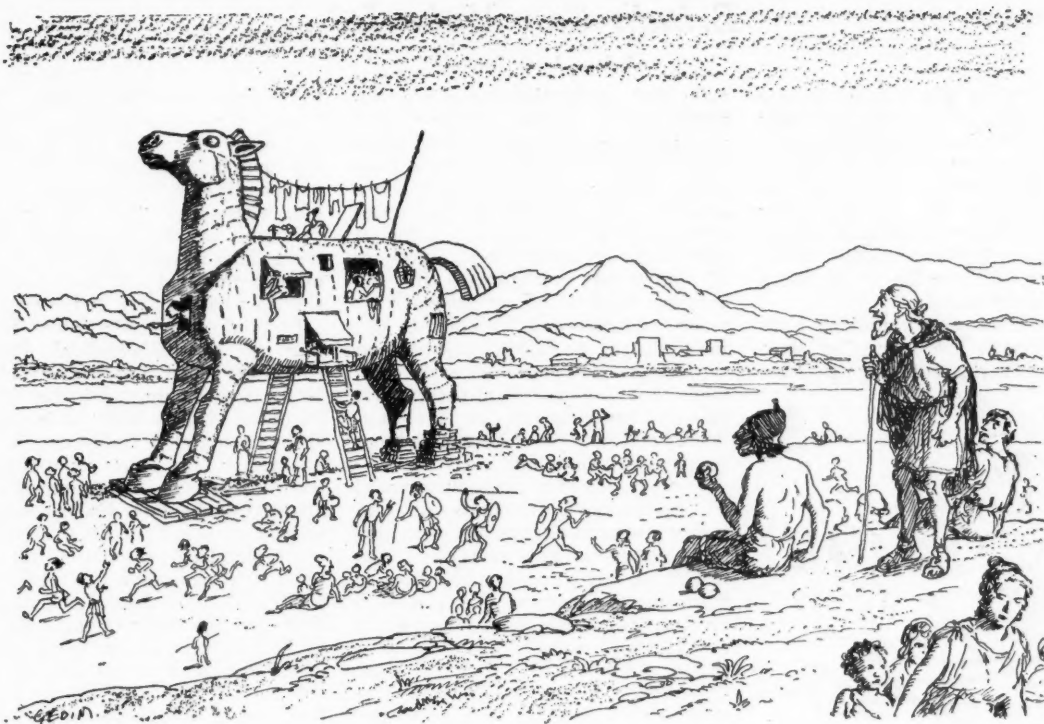
A MIXED TRIBUTE FOR MR. BEVIN

Mr. Butler and Mr. Boothby describe the Foreign Secretary's speech in somewhat conflicting terms.

ejaculatory expletives of the hon. Member for Evesham."

Mr. WILSON HARRIS turned the attention of the House momentarily to the state of the nation's underwear and the need for more coupons. He suspected that Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS "had a human heart beating against underwear which might be little better than his," but the President of the Board of Trade declined to yield to such vested interests.

For the rest of the day hon. Members brooded over the housing situation. A packed public gallery wonderingly watched the scramble for afternoon tea as Mr. MANNINGHAM BULLER, Chief Opposition spokesman, made the rather untimely comment to a thinning House that yet another debate on housing was evidence of the



"It's just a block of flats now, but I understand it has quite a history."

decree under which the elections to the Executive of the Greek trade unions had taken place had been declared invalid by the highest judicial authority in Greece.

Hon. but critical Members remained sceptical, but refrained from embarrassing the Foreign Secretary further, doubtless hoping to pay their penny and take their choice of interpretation if and when they managed to catch Mr. Speaker's eye.

Wednesday, October 23rd.—The wise decision of the Leader of the House, Mr. MORRISON, to order Members to bed at a reasonable hour overnight instead of allowing them to sit up all night, as many had wished, was reflected in the general alertness with which rank-and-filers entered into the interrogatory fray.

Tory back-benchers were dismayed, however, to find that their ex-Ministerial colleagues had apparently ignored Mr. MORRISON's "early to bed, early to rise" exhortation. The late appearance of the first front-bencher was greeted with a volume of cheers usually reserved for more auspicious occasions.

Mr. BEVIN, everyone was glad to see, was in better spirits. When he was asked for a report on the suicide of Goering, the Foreign Secretary scored neatly but evasively with the retort that that was rather a cold subject now.

Sir WALDRON SMITHERS provided the House with a further excuse for merriment when he sought from the Minister of Food, Mr. STRACHEY, details of the "Administration of Rats Order." Everyone was heartened to know that the rat menace was taken so seriously that the Ministry insisted on senior rat officers being chosen by a special selection board.

The House then resumed the debate on Foreign affairs, getting away to an excellent start with speeches from Premier ATTLEE and ex-Premier CHURCHILL.

Thursday, October 24th.—Mr. CHURCHILL was at his belligerent best to-day when sparring with that other ex-sea-dog from the Admiralty, Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER. Both wandered far from the "bone" of contention—the democratization of the armed forces—but the House found it all vastly entertaining.

The contestants had hardly been separated by Mr. Speaker before Mr. CHURCHILL, Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, and Mr. W. J. BROWN indulged in a noisy triangular sit-down shouting match over the Minister of Labour's refusal to volunteer a statement on the closed-shop principle. Mr. Speaker was again obliged to step into the ring to stop "imputations and insinuations" from being bandied about.

Mr. FRED BELLENGER announced his first notable innovation as War Minister—a system of "suspended animation" under which a battalion will be relegated to the reserve without officers or men on its strength after serving periods of home and overseas service. This, he explained, would avoid the disbandment of Regular battalions. Deep-rooted regimental traditions would not be sacrificed in the more flexible Army of to-morrow.

o o

For Quiet Evenings

"There is a comfortable clubroom for quiet evenings, equipped with piano and wireless—played, for the most part, simultaneously."—*Liverpool paper.*

Britain Can Make It.

A Late Look Round

GAIETY is not a characteristic of museums, even when they have balloon-salesmen and hot-dog bars outside, but it seemed to me that the Victoria and Albert radiated something very like it the other morning, and it would have taken more than an accordionist unkindly wheezing "Some of These Days" to put a damper on the crowds.

I forget how many millions have passed through the turn-stiles since September 24th, suffering a faint



uneasiness at the welcoming figure with the single enormous eye and the loud-speaker, and being reassured when its message ("Britain"—pause—"Can Make It!") carries the comfortable ring of B.B.C. English—but Sir Thomas Barlow and his Industrial Designers may well feel a little gay themselves; it must be a very special attraction that entices the post-war housewife into the longest queue in London, particularly when she knows that it can only end in sighing for the moon. To be sure, she is promised chromium-plated heaters and transparent oven-doors in the sweet by-and-by, but there is a feeling that when they do arrive in the shops they will come rather expensive. "I mean, they're a bit beyond our scope, like, aren't they, really?" said one lady wistfully of stainless steel sink units, and her husband grunted agreement.

Perhaps I should apologize for showing you straight into the kitchen like

this; the fact is, the domestic equipment sticks in the memory, and unhappy experiences in kitchens where larder-doors clump you over the head and a sharp movement may knock a stack of crockery into the pig-bucket cause most of the South Kensington pilgrims to feel keenly about a promise of improved conditions. In the spacious fashion hall (where you may pause while the exhibits come to you for a change) the dazzling creations on the revolving centre-piece draw comment that is almost perfunctory, but amongst the pots and pans and cupboards and cookers of Section 7 there are ecstatic twitterings.

Don't be afraid of the room devoted to "Packaging." It sounds dull, and the unctuous neologism does nothing to overcome the apprehensions of the fastidious, but there is plenty here to interest and surprise. Many of the protective devices were invented under the pressing necessity of war, when things simply had to reach their destinations in one piece, and once they become generally applied to the requirements of commerce there will be a good deal of frustration on the railways. I defy the most conscientious porter to do any real mischief, for example, to goods swaddled in a "fumigated flax rug" (I forget exactly why) and concealed in the middle of a straw-crammed crate.

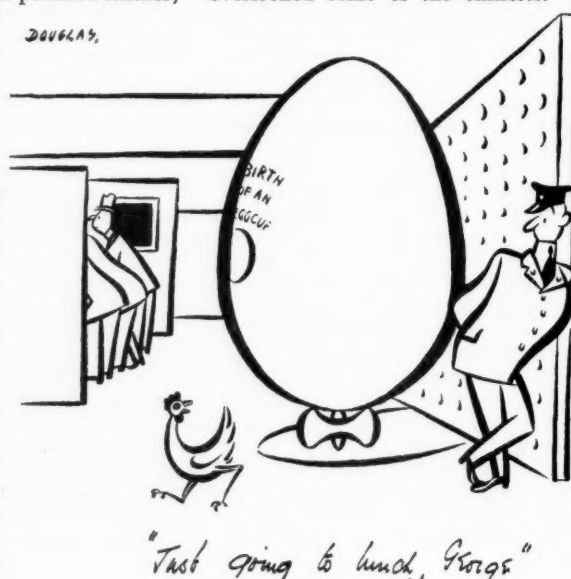
One curious object like a giant soap-container on a strap, apparently made of some sort of tough polished leather, caused a good deal of speculation among the uninformed. As a catalogue owner I was able to reveal that it was a "plastic personal pack," and an interested lady who had hooked her chin on my shoulder said, "Oh, is that what it is," and did not seem entirely enlightened when a whimsical passer-by explained to his son that it was intended for carrying cold suet puddings.

"Plastics," by the way, have not got quite the stranglehold on industry that one has been

led to expect, not to say fear. When I had only been in the place a minute or two an urchin ran past me screaming some unintelligible repetition. A (supposed) elder brother shouted after him with scorn, "Plarstics, plarstics, you can't say nothing but plarstics"; but I think the boy, like a good many other people, had paid too much attention to what he read in the papers.

Certainly some reports of the Exhibition had been misleading. For one thing, I expected almost everything to be for export only, but in fact quite a lot of the exhibits could be in our own shops now, and probably are, in small quantities; for another, newspaper stories of strange-looking bicycles and air-conditioned beds had suggested a wide range of such oddities; there is no cause for alarm: sensationalism chose these few examples from the small Section 22, "Designers Look Ahead"; there are not many of them, and the exhibition-goers are rather apathetic, possibly because the section is the last one, and by the time they get there they are thinking only of their feet. ("Want to see the space ship, Olive?" asked one sagging husband. "Not keen," was the reply.) I must admit that I didn't gather much about the space ship. The catalogue did its best with a note explaining that it could "land gently on a cushion of blast from atomic rocket-motors," but I wasn't very keen, either.

I suppose everybody must have overlooked some of the exhibits. I



don't remember a stainless steel teaset, or fifty designs for buttons, or a taxi (the catalogue note on the taxi begins "Discounting the horse . . ." but goes on to make quite good sense). Unfortunately I got into the Exhibition at the wrong end, and doggedly insisted on making my way upstream, so to speak. It was hard work, and I yearned for a seat, but the oases graciously labelled "You May Rest Here" were always full of people taking the hint. The empty chairs were either those cute little tubular ones for children, who, as any parent knows, do not sit down a great deal at exhibitions, or bigger ones marked "For Staff Only." (I think a sleeping man in a grey hat was occupying one of these on false pretences.)

The Nursery School (designer Ralph Tubbs) is one of the many good corners in "Things for Children." Its space, light and colour, with tiled floors and sensible midget furniture, drew a pathetic "Ah-h-h" from every passing parent. A lady from Yorkshire said, "Be a right shambles, time my three got round it," but the inflexion was one of longing. The children themselves were not interested; the word "school" disheartened them, and in any case they were impatient to get on to the toys.

And well they might be. The toys are a delight, and only tantalizing because they cannot be bought on the spot; nearly all are available now for the home market, and it is to be hoped that this Christmas they will oust the trash that has disgraced the toy-shops for nearly six years. "Available Soon" are the leopards, lionesses and other cuddly beasts so well designed by Miss F. M. Daniels; their uncanny likeness to life must seem shocking to the old school of toy-makers with their button-eyed bears. Throughout the Exhibition there are notices saying "Do Not Touch"; in "Things for

Children" they are reinforced to read "Do Not Touch *Anything*," and while the anxiety of the organizers is understandable, one's sympathy goes out to parents; it is not easy to keep eager hands away from such items as "Post Office with blue roof and green door," "Wobbly Duck," and of course the Spitfires, Meteors, Mustangs and all their dashing relations.

The Men's Wear section will be a disappointment to the dress reformers; we are going to plod complacently along as we always have, with our navy overcoats and our chalk-stripe suits. We ask nothing different, as you can see from the embarrassed way we avert our eyes from a velvet-faced cashmere smoking-jacket in a dark wine shade with (I seem to remember) a sash. It makes an isolated splash of ostentation. Exhibit No. W.198 should cheer the remaining release groups; it is "Available Soon" and is described with simplicity—"Bowler."

One especially brightly-handled affair is called "What Industrial Design Means," and shows the design and production of an ordinary household egg-cup from beginning to end—from before the beginning, in fact, because, on the score that they produce the egg to which the cup must conform, this exhibition within an exhibition even shows us the hens.

"Things in Their Home Setting" is a pleasant section, its twenty-four "Furnished Rooms" arranged with an artistry that banishes the phrase's dreary connotations. There were bound to be a few laughs at the designers' expense of course, as people moved from room to room trying to find their own level, and I heard a farm labourer's bedroom come in for some hard words from a visitor of the farm-labouring type. Pointing to a framed lithograph on the wall he said biting, "Ah, stands to reason, I s'pose, I'd have a picture of a ruddy

tractor 'anging in my bedroom!" Actually, the tractor was only a pink one. And a man who might well have been a bank-manager shook his head doubtfully over the small aquarium (on handsome built-in pedestal) in the living-room of an imaginary bank-manager; but then, somebody will always quibble. I thought the rooms were very well done, excepting perhaps those imputed to journalists, which looked rather too tidy and prosperous. . . .

The main display piece has been left to the last, partly because a lot has already been written about it, but mainly because "Shopwindow Street" seems to epitomize the spirit and execution of the whole Exhibition. The setting is very fine. As the visitor comes into the section he sees the "street" with its bright shop-windows filled with commodities of the near-future, stretching away under a dark-blue sky; if he is giving his mind to it he must realize, almost with a shock, just how much has gone into the creating not only of this single effect, but the show as a whole, and Industrial Design as a movement; the plan is the same throughout—an overall scheme calculated to throw the individual exhibits into prominence. Industrial Design, having survived the danger of remaining merely a "significant trend," has become a power, and this Exhibition is not just another dry-as-dust collection of things to look at and forget, it is something young, vigorous, alive and kicking.

Altogether, by the time I had battled my way against the tide to achieve the Entrance (the Exit, that is, for wrong-headed persons) I was very much impressed. I only realized afterwards that, owing to the inflexible route laid down for visitors, I had been forced to the strange expedient of showing a Press ticket to get me out of a building. J. B. B.



Hobson's Choice

At the Play

"MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING"
(ALDWYCH)

MR. ROBERT DONAT has cast himself well as *Benedick*. He has a very personal formula for the romantic hero, compounded of a kind of surly warmth, a sudden declension into gentleness and a bold informality which both literature and life confirm to be the surest path into the female heart. But it is a Nordic, not a Latin, *Benedick*, solid rather than mercurial. Mr. DONAT works the stops in a rich voice with all the skill of a cathedral organist, and long practice in the studio has taught him how to act with his face. The special technique of the cinema close-up is very evident here, particularly in the way in which he breaks up his long soliloquies. This seems to me all to the good, except that it leads him sometimes into being too leisurely. Slowness is the cardinal fault of the production, which Miss FABIA DRAKE has otherwise kept lively and, as it should be, rather superficial. (This is really a very sophisticated comedy, and the plot, though neatly morticed, holds nothing heavier than dew-drops. Seldom can a girl's reputation have been blasted on scantier evidence, and evidence which nobody, not even her suffering father, makes the slightest attempt to check up. *Beatrice*, an intelligent creature devoted to *Hero*, might have been expected to make a few amateur inquiries, and *Hero* herself would have been more sensibly employed in establishing an alibi than in mouldering in an oubliette. Moreover, *John the Bastard's* tremendous reputation as a bad hat, coupled with this easily understandable dislike for *Claudio*, is something to which *Leonato's* house-party remains obstinately blind. All these points call for the high polish of artificiality.) Even *Dogberry*, whom Mr. JAY LAURIER imbues with a fruity, music-hall quality, is too measured, as if waiting for gallery thunder to die down.

As *Beatrice* Miss RENÉE ASHERSON is nearly very good. She is high-

mettled and bubbling over with mischief, and in the church scene sufficiently fiery; but she is a little too arch, a little too optically arch, if I may say so without offence, putting her eyes into a steep climb with too frequent an ecstasy of pertness. Miss VALERIE WHITE fulfils competently the simpler demands of *Hero* (though these, it is true, include lying patiently silent for a long time on a stone floor while her honour is torn to shreds over her head), Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS suggests a tolerant host, and Mr. PATRICK



SIGNS OF APPROACHING RESIGNATION FROM
BACHELORS' CLUB

<i>Beatrice</i>	MISS RENÉE ASHERSON
<i>Benedick</i>	MR. ROBERT DONAT

TROUGHTON deals faithfully with that tiresome youth, *Claudio*. The acting is generally sound. Mr. JOHN ARMSTRONG has done a very good job on the costumes and an adequate one on the sets, and Mr. ALLAN GRAY's music is charming. Altogether not a brilliant but a creditable production, and if London fails to support Mr. DONAT's enterprise more numerous than it did on the third night it deserves to drop ingloriously into the Second Division. It already deserves anyway to be sentenced to a month's hard listening to nothing but crooners mouthing nothing but dirges about you, me, purple skies, and baby dear through nothing but their noses and

the most expensively boosted microphones. Having done time of this sort our great art centre might have worked some of the futility out of its system and so discover a faint hunger for something better.

"THE ASSASSIN"
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

This is a poetic melodrama in which the murder of Lincoln is seen through the wrong end of a telescope. Lincoln is in fact invisible, except as a statue with an awkward trick of wagging its head and a sonorous ghost which frightens the life out of his slayer with the prophecy that assassination is what he needed to cement him on his pedestal for all time. (I should have thought Lincoln might have been dimly remembered even if he had been run over by a milk-cart at the age of a hundred and three.) At the big end is *Booth*, the crazy and fanatical actor who leaped into the President's box with the maximum of exhibitionism and then delayed his exit to let off a fifth-form Latin tag from the stage. The play shows his bitterness at the defeat of the South, his absurd posturing before his accomplices, the excitements of his escape, his agonies as a hunted man in the swamps of the Mississippi (made less hospitable by Lincoln's ghost) and the final drama of his suicide in a flaming cabin in Virginia. Some of these events Mr. PETER YATES succeeds in bringing to the theatre, but the weakness of the piece is that *Booth's*

megalomania is too insignificant a theme to hold the interest completely except in its relation to *Lincoln*, and *Lincoln* remains hazily in the background. From any angle *Booth* was a wretched fellow, and any play about a wretched fellow starts with a severe handicap.

Mr. YATES' verse is not remarkable, and at times, as in the domestic scene at the beginning, is stilted; but it has some good phrases as well as some poor ones and the virtue of being both clear and expressive. With a fuller subject he will probably write a more interesting play, for his drawing of *Booth's* character, though he leaves us guessing whether loyalty or mere

insanity is really its driving force, shows insight, and the circumstances of his end a certain sense of the theatre.

He would have been wiser to demobilize the soldiers who act as chorus. I confess I found their burden obscure and their presence irritating. They seem to mourn a kind of cosmic tragedy in *Lincoln's* fate, as if it was likely to sunder the world. Being bumped off is still, after all, a major risk of successful statesmanship in many countries, and why these intense young men in modern battledress, who must have become accustomed to seeing violent death, should take this extreme view I cannot imagine. When the play is being realistic they only clutter it up, giving an ordinary stage-doorway a very odd appearance, and where it is being imaginative their intervention can be most unfortunate. In the scene, otherwise effective, of *Booth's* riverside nightmare they suddenly pop up behind a gauze oval looking for all the world like a birthday card for adult triplets with love from Mum and Dad.

As *Booth* Mr. PETER GLENVILLE treats us to a fine display of histrionic fireworks. He lets off the rockets of ambition and the catherine-wheels of temperament with a sure hand. It is a notable slice of ham, but the shortcomings of the play would not have been so evident if *Booth* had seemed to think a little more and strut a little less.

Shakespeare and *Lincoln* — what other name is worthy to be linked with these to complete this week's trilogy? I plumped for BUD FLANAGAN.

"THE NIGHT AND THE LAUGHTER" (COLISEUM)

Alas, there is scarcely any laughter. BUD FLANAGAN, of whom I am an ardent admirer, is to my mind utterly mishandled. He is becoming a pathetic universal uncle, patting little girls

is wading knee-deep in sugar and when he does try to amuse us his lines are paralytically feeble. Above all he lacks a competent feed. The little girl who shares the most glucose of these exercises, Miss ANGELA GLYNNE, is a promising young actress, but she cannot be expected to provide the mental tin-tacks on which Mr. FLANAGAN needs to step back from time to time. It will be nothing short of a national calamity if he allows himself to decline into being no more than a heart-teaser at a microphone.

The evening is once or twice brightened a little by the THREE SAILORS, particularly when they skip, but they spend far too much time slapping one another's faces. Except in small and well-calculated doses it is a wearisome pastime.

Those, however, who find all they want in spectacle should not be disappointed. The revolving stage serves eyeful after glamorous eyeful with the swift if rather overwhelming efficiency of a vast cafeteria. Enormous teams of ladies dig deeply into an enormous wardrobe to turn the tap of romance full on. France, Spain and Ruritania are plumbed to their exotic depths.

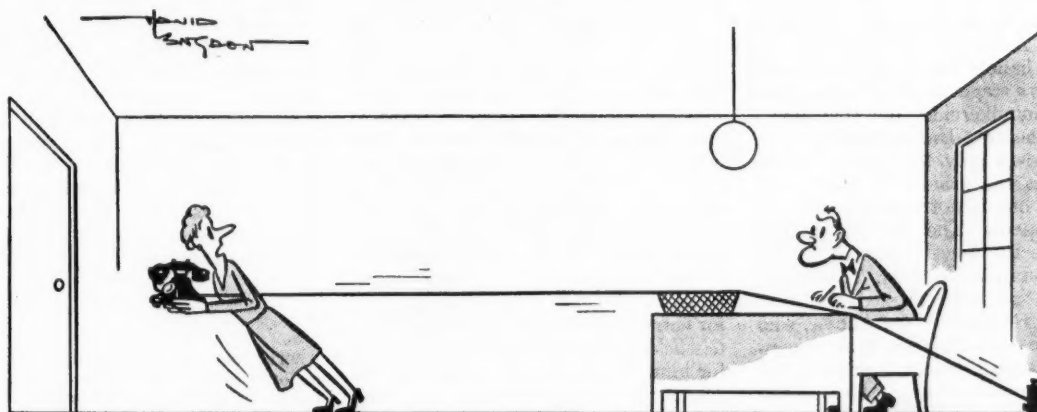
Miss NANCY BROWN sings picturesquely and Miss BERYL KAYE dances much more skilfully than her material demands. But her religious mime showing the common man struggling for salvation and finding it in a Jerusalem consisting mainly of desirable sun-parlours seems curiously out of place. ERIC.



A SENTIMENTAL BUDDY

The Audience MISS ANGELA GLYNNE
The Clown MR. BUD FLANAGAN

on the head with a wealth of heavily amplified sadness, at the expense of being that harder thing, a humorist. It goes over well enough in pantomime, but adults who recall how magnificently funny BUD FLANAGAN can be will find it lamentable. He has always had a gift for pathos, but here he



"It was in your OUT tray, wasn't it?"

At the Ballet

BALLET RAMBERT
(KING'S THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH)

THE Ballet Rambert have opened a six-week season at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith. As WALTER GORE is now happily recovered from the accident that befell him while playing *Mr. Punch* a few months ago, our picturesque namesake is back again on the strength, throwing Junior out of the window, murdering *Mrs. Punch* and belabouring the *Devil* with all his customary zest. We have to record with a certain feeling of shame that he bedevilled the orchestra as well as the Prince of Darkness on his reappearance and put the conductor's light out as well as starting a kind of scrimmage in the music. The culprit may of course have been that good-for-nothing *Scaramouche*, for there is such a thing as giving *Punch* a bad name and getting hanged by him. *Jack Ketch* did. But that is as may be. . . . What is certain is that the action of the ballet has been tightened up a great deal, partly owing to the advent of two strange and sinister individuals dressed in flowing black, with top hats draped in luxuriant weepers and Union Jacks on the front. These melancholy characters are equally efficient as undertakers, scene-shifters or assistant hangmen, and are always in the offing whenever there is dirty work on foot—of which, regrettably, there is sure to be a considerable quantity when the unregenerate *Punch* is about.

The first thing that strikes the ballet-goer about the productions of the Ballet Rambert is their wonderful finish. Everything is rehearsed down to the smallest detail, and carried out with an artistry and devotion to ideals that would be hard to equal, let alone surpass. And how it is possible to compress ballets like *Giselle* and *Swan Lake* on to a stage not much larger than a pocket handkerchief, like that of the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, is a secret known only to Madame RAMBERT—but she achieves it with such skill that one is not conscious of any lack of space. The dancers do not appear in the least cramped. Both these ballets are triumphs. The second act of *Swan Lake* opened the first night programme. SONIA AROVA, who dances the *Swan Princess*, is an accomplished classical dancer, a pupil of the great Preobrajenskaya. Her *Swan Princess* has not only dignity and beauty of line but poetry and softness as well. It is a very fine performance.

REX REID is the *Prince*, a very good dancer and mime with an excellent sense of style. The décor by HARRY CORDWELL is a masterpiece of effective simplicity. The lake in the background and a shadowy castle in the distance are just suggested in dull bluey-greys and greens, and the effect is to make the back of the tiny stage recede far into the distance. Everything that is inessential is left out—the swan on wheels, for instance, that in many productions is dragged across the “lake” as the curtain rises and exhibits an incurable tendency to get stuck halfway (voice in wings: “Arry, look out for that blinkin’ duck!”) or to finish its swim with its head under water and its tail and hind wheels cocked up in the air. Madame RAMBERT has wisely consigned it to limbo.

Perhaps an even more remarkable achievement than *Swan Lake* is the Ballet Rambert's *Giselle*, with SALLY GILMOUR in the title-rôle. SALLY GILMOUR is one of the most distinctive personalities in present-day ballet. She has a quality all her own. She has a good classical technique, but she is not a classical ballerina, and she is something much more than a *demi-caractère* dancer. She is slender and taut as a willow-wand, with a peculiar grace in the carriage of her head, and her piquant face and large eyes invest her with a poetic charm and a fairy-like elusiveness. Her *Giselle* is intensely real and vital—one can really believe in this innocent peasant-girl whose feyness finds expression in dancing. She dances with a slightly mischievous sense of fun, like a fallen leaf that cannot stay still but must swirl suddenly and madly round and round in obedience to some mysterious impishness. When she finds that her lover has deceived her and that the marguerite whose petals she plucked—“... he loves me not”—spoke the truth, her flame-like intensity and feyness are so clearly in the minds of her audience that it seems quite inevitable that the shock of betrayal should deprive her of her reason. Such a building-up of this difficult rôle is a great artistic feat. SALLY GILMOUR is of course helped greatly by the excellent miming of MICHAEL BAYSTON as the *Prince*. He depicts so vividly his shame and remorse at what he has done, his frenzied rage with *Hilarion* for betraying him, and his wild grief at *Giselle's* death that one feels really sorry for him. Very few interpreters of this rôle make the *Prince* seem anything but a dummy. This is the great merit of the Ballet Rambert's *Giselle*, and what distinguishes it from nearly all

others—it is so much alive. Not only do the principals mime so effectively that every detail of the action and of their conversations are clear, but each individual on the stage is acting all the time. DAPHNE GOW, for instance, in the rôle of the *Princess Bathilde*, acts as if she realizes that, though her rival *Giselle* is dead, the love of the *Prince* is lost to her none the less. Usually she is no more than a richly-dressed passive spectator of the tragedy. Here she is a broken-hearted woman, whom the *Prince* has betrayed just as cruelly as he betrayed *Giselle*. If London ballet-goers knew what they were missing they would make the short expedition to Hammersmith and seats in the King's Theatre would be difficult to obtain.

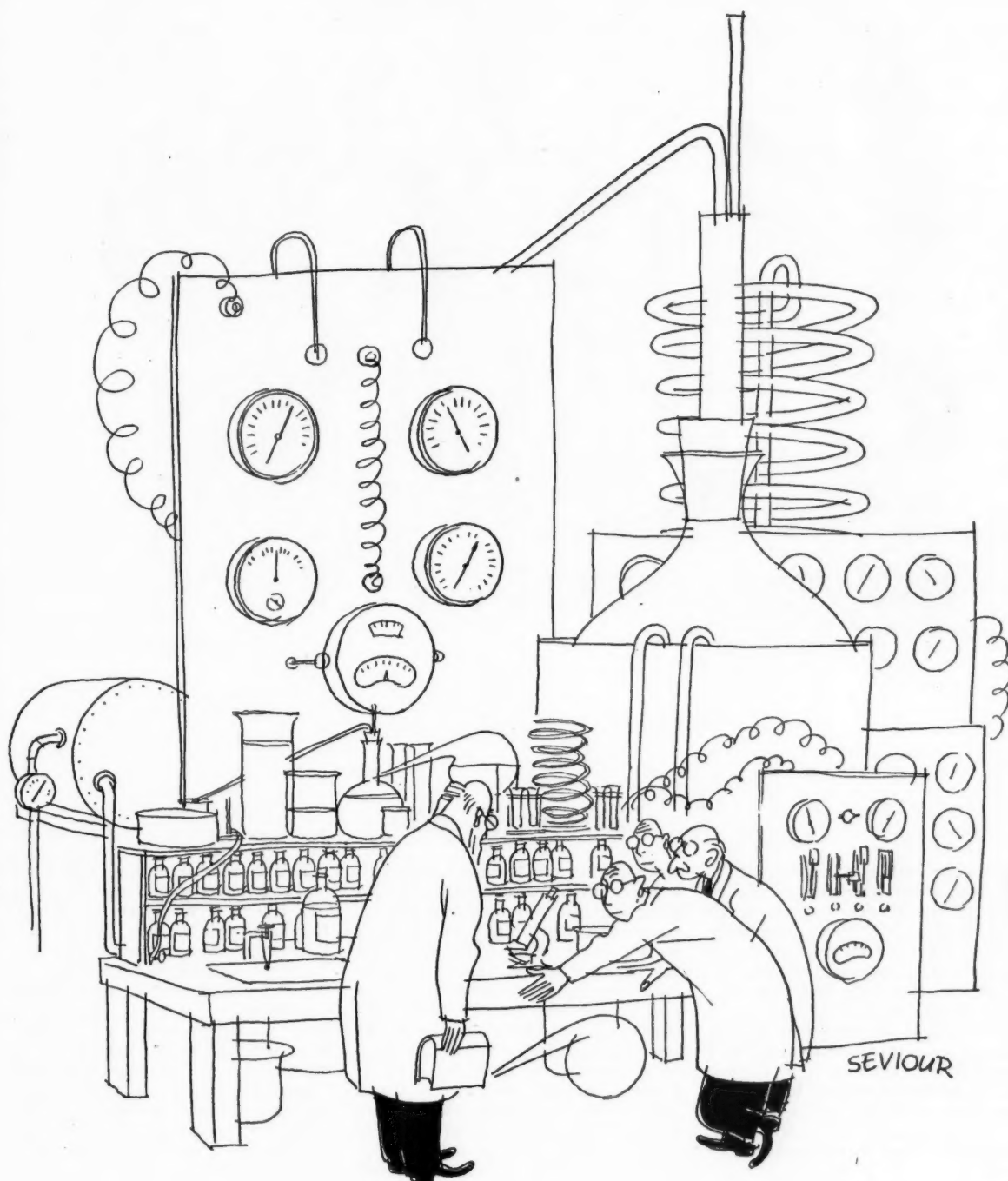
Jardin aux Lilas is revived this season with SALLY GILMOUR again in the rôle of the girl who tries to snatch a few moments alone with her lover to bid him farewell on the eve of her marriage to a man she does not love. This part suits her very well. The ballet is danced to CHAUSSON's *Poème*, and she seems the personification of the solo violin, taut and sensitive as a violin string. When her lover approaches her body seems to sing, and a mute deadens the song when her (suitably repellent) husband-to-be leads her away. ANDRÉE HOWARD's *Mermaid*, to music by RAVEL and with a décor by herself, is also back in the repertoire. The story is Hans Andersen's tale of the mermaid who changes her tail for legs because she has fallen in love with a Prince. But, alas, the Prince loves a Spanish Princess, so the poor Mermaid puts on her tail again and goes back to the sea.

The programmes are being so planned that several décors by the same artist shall be seen in the same week. HUGH STEVENSON, whose work was seen in the first week, has an excellent sense of colour and atmosphere. His settings for *Giselle* are charming. The first act has a frame of autumn leaves and in the background a Rhine castle on a peak and a river encircling its foot. The second act, all poetry and gloom, is most effective. *Soirée Musicale*, a divertissement to music by ROSSINI, has a charming Victorian ballroom setting, and *Jardin aux Lilas* is equally happy. D. C. B.

“The fact that the city had suffered no major epidemic since re-occupation was a reflection on the efficient working of the Sanitary Staff of the Corporation.”

Burma paper.

Oh, come, you're expecting too much!



"All we need now is an elastic band."



"... and whatever you do—don't let baby eat the coal."

Learning English

TO the best of my knowledge it is outside the realm of possibility for the foreigner to learn to speak the English language so perfectly as to be taken for an Englishman by the English. You can fool some of the people some of the time; you can, and that is the highest praise, be mistaken for a Welshman or a Scot. But unless you came to England as a tiny baby, were brought up by English people and went to school in England your chance of mastering the language to the extent of becoming indistinguishable from the ordinary native is nil.

I am not talking about reading or writing English. That's easy. Anybody with two years' study of the language can read and understand contemporary English books and newspapers (except, of course, newspaper headlines). Not

much greater erudition is required to learn to write reasonably well. No other tongue has so simple a grammar, none can so magnificently manage with so few words. And when writing in English, remember that simplicity lends dignity to your style. The briefer your sentences, the fewer and shorter your words, the closer you come to the ideal. You won't be a Shakespeare—but then it is very doubtful whether any of the Great Bard's plays would be accepted by a West End theatrical producer of to-day. "Too verbose, old chap," he'd say. "Plot, O.K., but far too many characters and speeches. And those names! The public wouldn't stand for it, you know!" So, you see, writing is no trouble at all as long as you cut out the frills and stick to the essentials.

This is what I mean. When you begin a letter don't use the Central European technique of "Highly Honoured Sir"; say "Dear Sir." When you finish, leave out the Western European flourish of "Allow me, sir, the expression of my most sincere salutations"—just put "Yours faithfully" (quite irrespective of whether what you had to say was faithful or otherwise; you can also finish with "yours sincerely" or "yours truly," but these endings, for some reason, are only used in correspondence with very good friends. The last, and shortest, is, in fact, the warmest thing you can say in writing, unless you add "very truly" which is pretty hot, or else just put "yours"—which is positively intimate).

Don't let your knowledge of words carry you away. The fewer words you

use the more elegant is your literary style; and one-syllabled words are the best. Foreigners invariably give themselves away by parading whole strings of rare four-syllabled words before their English friends who may never have seen such words, and certainly distrust them instantly. Also, don't forget to make paragraphs if you must use more than four sentences. A paragraph is a breathing space, and the strong and silent English are not used to rhapsodic letters.

As for punctuation, don't use it. I once lost a very able secretary because she refused to put semi-colons where I wanted them. Patiently, for days, she ignored my requests. I tried to bribe her by giving her a rise that she had not asked for. But she would not yield to so alien a suggestion; it was an infringement of her civic liberties to ask her to put semi-colons. Luckily, you can dispense with punctuation without loss of prestige. All you really need is the simple "full stop." Comma, colon, semi-colon, exclamation-mark, even question-mark are needless complications. They impair the simple purity of your style.

Once you have learned to read and write, be happy and relax. If you have any sense you won't waste your time trying to learn to speak English like the English. You will of course have to talk in English if you live in the country; but you will always be picked out as a foreigner, even if you say no more than "Three ha'pence, please," to the bus-conductor. Have you ever heard of anybody who could miaow to deceive a cat? Nor can you ever deceive that most sensitive of human detectors, the Englishman's ear. He will say nothing for minutes; then, suddenly, will come the inevitable inquiry, kindly, well-meaning, nay, forgiving: "And what part of the world do you come from?" I tell you it's no use.

But there is a consolation.

"It is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman despise him." George Bernard Shaw, himself an Irishman, made that observation in his preface to *Pygmalion*; and how true it is.

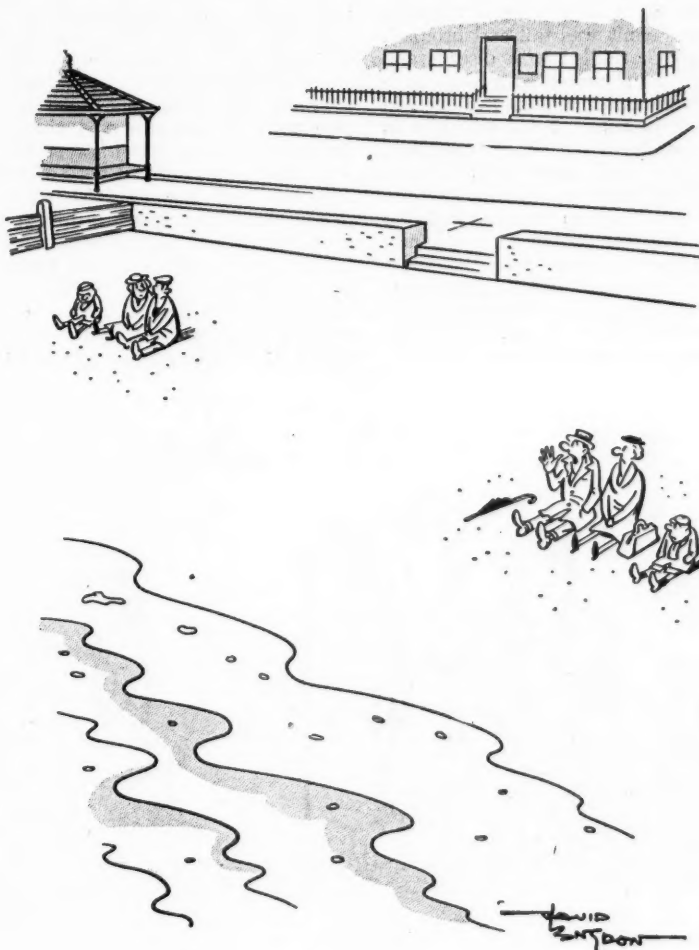
The people of Yorkshire take a very poor view of the way English is spoken in Somerset; while Somerset thinks naught of the Cockney accent. The Cockneys of London cannot bear to hear a Geordie of Newcastle; a Kentish man all but laughs openly at a Cornish man; in Sussex they think Buckinghamshire English funny; and they all loathe and are all loathed by the superior Oxford accent.

So you see for yourself, dear foreigner, that this is a family party with tempers already a little frayed. Don't you go and put your foot in it. That's the only time when all the conflicting accents will combine and turn on you, with equal condescension and ill-concealed contempt. Don't try to give yourself English airs. They catch you out by the way you say "no"; you'll never get that vowel right, with its lingering, indeterminable fluctuation between "o" and "a" and "u"—let alone such insurmountable barriers as the correctly lisped "th," the half-rolled, half-swallowed "r," the "wh" which is partly blown, partly hissed, partly inhaled. During the war, Home Guards were given a simple recipe for catching German parachutists. "Make 'em pronounce 'Warwickshire'!" It is the unpronounceability of the English language that saved

England from invasion. My advice is, Be Yourself. Don't apologize and don't try to be taken for an Englishman. Learn English to the best of your ability, and stop there. Don't try to foist an Oxford accent on top of a Dutch one. It's more trouble than it's worth.

Magic for Children

Thursday, October 31st, Hallowe'en, is a National Day of Magic. Magicians and Magical Societies throughout the country are giving their services, with the double object of raising much-needed funds for the N.S.P.C.C. and entertaining children's homes and hospitals. Most towns of any size will have a performance. Readers should consult their local press for details.



"Staggered?"

Well Frapped Down

(The adventures of Blake Slip, Spanish Burton, a lazy painter, a long clinker-built fellow named Carvel, Rope Jack, Captain Common Sennit, Nettle W. Stuff and others.—With acknowledgments to the "Admiralty Manual of Seamanship," Vols. I and II, without which this story could never have been written.)

IT was a fine day for a sail with many a Soldier's wind in the offing and promise of much good gybeing, taunting and reaching. We also anticipated some good beatings on our Port tack with here and there a chance of catching the wind's eye and of meeting her and warping the wriggle.

Captain Sennit, that doughty salted seaman, having snapped off a sizeable portion of his quid with his firm black teeth and having ejected a well aimed stream of brown juice into our frothing wake, settled himself in the stern-sheets and proceeded to navigate our trim craft with all the skill and graceful nurture of the well-bred seaman. Captain Sennit was tall and bronzed, and though riddled with disease and partially blind presented a formidable and commanding appearance even in a sitting posture. I watched him in silent admiration as his roving sea-green eyes took stock of our well-rigged and ample stored Dipping Lug: there was the top hamper and the rope yarn, two jiggers with a handy billy, a heaver, a guest-warp, two spare nocks, a gin block, a cat's paw, three cringles and a cone, a Spanish fox, a Pitometer, a lupur, two parbuckles for our port and starboard quarter casks,

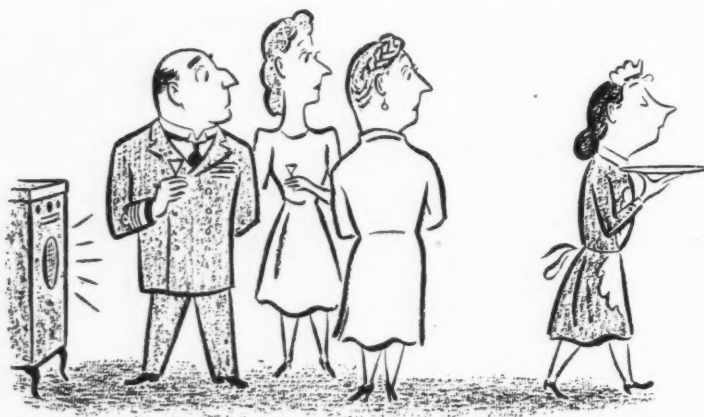
a sheer-pole with rattling lines well frapped down, a piece of sword matting with thrum mat to match, and last but not least a horse, parcelled, wormed and served.

Captain Sennit was soon battling with a muzzler and ordered his crew to knock out the fids, to fleet aft and girt back the sail. No sooner was this done than with bare poles all-a-taut and with berth shifted we proceeded without further orders to rake round for a mousing. The spray from a west sou' westerly wind, strength 8, was by this time causing us considerable discomfort and we all (with the exception of L. Painter) proceeded to girt our hanks in goring clothes and chinse. A.B. Slip also took the opportunity to make fast his paunch-mat with a Blackwall hitch; he had got halfway through with this cumbersome operation when it was observed that our forr'ard 'midships camel had sprung a leak and stood in urgent need of being stoppered and bowed down without delay. Snatching up a lizard from the nearest sea chest, Nettle Stuff started forward, but was immediately snubbed by an excessive quantity of spoon-drift which had been stirred up by the freshening breeze. Captain Sennit, taking the whole situation in a flash,

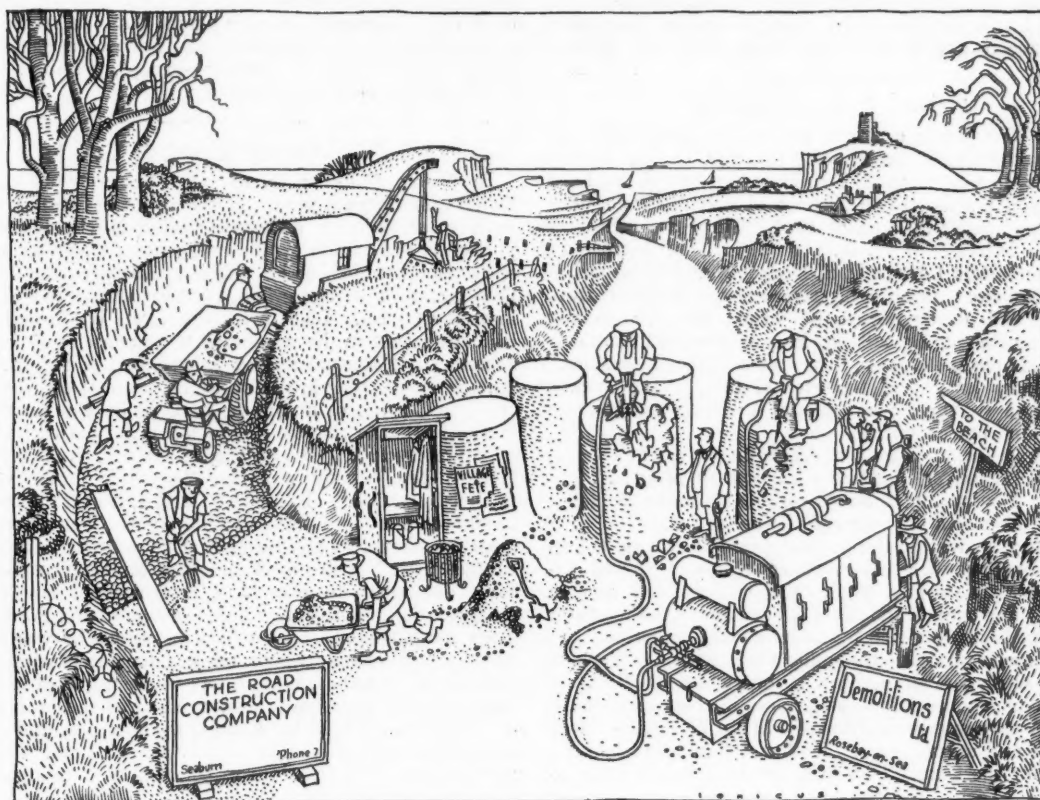
ordered Stuff back to the stern-sheets, pointing out as he did so that he (Stuff) was slack in the stays. Hereupon Stuff was seen to take in a reef as indicated; but it was apparent that he was much put out at the Captain's remark. To ease the tension that now existed in the boat, Ldg. Sea. Carvel started to tell one of his rogues' yarns and had reached the stage when someone or something had got stripped to the gantlines when we were all suddenly transfixed to our thwarts by the ghastly and unnatural sight of a Turk's Head Running. For the first time in his sea career Captain Sennit panicked. As he forced the helm hard-a-down and let fly the mizzen sail we spun round giddily luff upon luff until none of us knew whether we were rounding up, in irons, pooped, flying to, offing or merely going about. I heard the scantlings groan with the sudden strain and clutched a fiddle to steady myself. Above the din I bellowed to our unnerved Captain to fly up in the wind or at least to ply to wind'ard. Sennit took neither course, and eventually we found ourselves running free. The wind had now abated to force 2 and all hands turned to to splice the mainbrace. Fortified, and with promise of many a potent pint remaining in our barricoe, we looked round to reckon up the damage. Our sprungs, crank woodlings and vane were a mass of twisted steel, wood and hemp; our gang board was flying to and looked dangerously unseaworthy. On Carvel moving forr'ard to check the feathers in the jaws of a joggle shackle our bows ducked downward alarmingly without a corresponding rise from our stern. From this we were not slow to realize that we were broken-backed. After many anxious hours during which our barque remained precariously waterborne we made a landfall and somehow, all weary as we were, and weather gauged, managed to lower the dinghy and pull ourselves ashore. As I write (rather thickly with marline-spike and pitch) we are busying ourselves in taking a bight and paying out several half-hitches from our spunyarn belts and standing by to rig our night clothing.

P.S.—Spanish Burton says that as a special treat he will play us to sleep to-night with "Heart of Oak" on his boatswain's pipe.

JW TAYLOR



"And now 'What shall we do with the Drunken Sailor?' for Miss Ellen Bates, The Moorings, Mudthorpe-on-Sea."



Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The English in Portugal

They Went to Portugal (CAPE, 15/-), a long but delightfully written and always amusing book, consists, Miss ROSE MACAULAY says, of specimens of English visitors to Portugal selected from a still larger work, at least half of which is, it seems, still in manuscript. Passing lightly over British-Iberian traffic in the thousand years which ended in the collapse of the Roman Empire, Miss MACAULAY comes to the Crusades. As there were many Saracens in Portugal, Anglo-Norman crusaders used to land there on their way to Palestine, to assist the local Christians, who, according to a Portuguese historian, retained odious memories of this comradeship in arms. Hardly less troublesome to the Portuguese was the struggle in Lisbon river four centuries later between the Royalist fleet under Prince Rupert and the Commonwealth fleet under Blake. Miss MACAULAY does not tell us whether Wellington raised our credit in Portugal; but she records the Anglophobia of a horse who, when the Prince of Wales visited Portugal in 1876, refused to draw the prince's carriage, to the satisfaction of Senhor Ortigão, a distinguished journalist. Many English writers have visited Portugal, and Miss MACAULAY has in each instance picked out characteristic details: Beckford paring down his travelling establishment to the absolute minimum of a physician, maître d'hôtel, baker, cook, footman and valet de chambre; Byron conducting a disapproving Childe

Harold rapidly towards the nobler land of Spain; Tennyson wilting under the Portuguese sun and talking darkly of leaving his bones by the side of Henry Fielding. Н. К.

Meet the Baba Yaga

A third generation of English children will soon be enjoying *Russian Fairy Tales* (ROUTLEDGE, 30/-). Andrew Lang introduced Russia's terrible witch, the Baba Yaga, and Russia's heroic stand-by the faithful steed, in *The Red Fairy Book*; Dr. Post Wheeler produced a dozen folk-tales, with M. Bilibin's perfect illustrations, in 1912; and now comes Mr. NORBERT GUTERMAN's new translation, into supple and well-tempered American, of over a hundred and seventy of the six hundred tales collected by Afanasief in the middle of the last century. Here is one of those increasingly rare treasures, a book for scholars and children—and for anyone between these categories who has a touch of the scholar or the child. Try the stories out aloud—their whole tradition is oral, and still persists—on an audience with the above-mentioned qualifications. They are mostly short and dramatic; and their personages, especially the helpful beasts, are more individualized than is usual in such *märchen*. Mr. ROMAN JAKOBSON's appendix goes expertly into the antecedents of the tales and their collectors. (Their first transcriber was English physician to Peter the Great's father.) Mr. A. ALEXEIEFF furnishes

decorations which really decorate and are characteristically Russian; but, apart from a cat, a dog and a fox, they make no pretence to out-illustrate the incomparable M. Bilibin.

H. P. E.

Flowers from the Desert

JAMES WALKER is a young poet who served with the R.A.F. in the Middle East during this war, but the best of his poems (*Against the Sun*, THE FORTUNE PRESS, 6/-) have a nostalgic, potpourri-like flavour of the Neo-Georgians and of the soldier authors of 1914. There are echoes of Walter de la Mare, of W. H. Davies (in "The Intrusion" and "The Words I Have"), of Hodgson, and above all of Rupert Brooke. As an exile, remembering England from canteens and dusty places, he writes with the aching familiar sentiment; he calls up English flowers in summer lanes, the hares in the grass, "the grey cold Northern skies," "the eternal lover and the eternal lass," "the cuckoo changing his sly tune"; he looks at the map which shows him England but cannot tell

"How in the autumn night the curlew cries

Or thrush or blackbird harmonize in May . . .

For these such things consult the wiser chart

Engraved upon the exiled English heart."

He has, too, a love for the picturesque and archaic things in the countryside which is unexpected nowadays and disarming; he praises gnarled Scottish crofters and yeomen standing "fine against the skyline," condemns the reservoir which "made farmers rich by robbing earth of spring." Of course there is no discredit—quite the contrary—in seeing England as Rupert Brooke saw it, but when Mr. WALKER tries a quite modern idiom, as he does in some of his later work and particularly in *Threnody in the Desert*, he seems ill at ease and unsuccessful. He has a simple heart and a true ear for the beauty of words, but he does not seem to



have found his feet as yet in the present. Which only goes to show, if it needed showing again, that the poetic background is as barren and unhelpful now for a beginner as it has ever been in our history—except, possibly, for the middle of the eighteenth century.

R. M. F.

George Canning

In *George Canning* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 12/6) Sir CHARLES PETRIE has given an account of Canning which, both biographically and historically, is clear, well-proportioned and, while sympathetic, not excessively partial either to its subject or his policies. Although the Canning family was English in origin, Canning always looked upon himself as Irish. Like Swift, Sheridan, Wilde and other brilliant Irishmen, he was much more consciously bent on success than is usual among Englishmen of ability. The only desirable thing in the world, he wrote at eighteen, was the gratification of ambition; and, as he had no money, it was fortunate that he should fall in love with a woman who possessed £100,000, an accident which, as Sir CHARLES PETRIE temperately remarks, "certainly improved his financial position." In his late thirties, from 1807 to 1809, he showed more foresight and audacity as Foreign Secretary than was shown by any other English politician during the conflict with Napoleon. There was, Sir CHARLES PETRIE says, obviously no breach of international law in the measures Canning took to secure the Danish and Portuguese fleets for English use. On both occasions he was a step ahead of Napoleon, whose respect for international law was of a more lethargic kind, and whose hopes of invading England were now finally destroyed. Yet the premiership continued to be held by English mediocrities, and it was only in the year of his death, after a second and still more brilliant period at the Foreign Office, that Canning at last became Prime Minister.

H. K.

Whither Education?

Sixty or seventy years ago there was a day-school in the North of England which ran a School Parliament for boys and girls under ten. Survivors maintain that it was hard on minorities, for the childish mass-mind is even more intolerant of nonconformity than the mature one. The best thing that can be said for the system as displayed in *When We're at School* (WITHERBY, 8/6) is that though no opposition is allowed in the School Parliament of this particular boys' Prep., an intransigent member, aged twelve, is allowed to voice his sense of being Nazified with a candour which will do him no good hereafter. The enthusiasts of the school, who have written and illustrated this book in collaboration, will undoubtedly supply a demand. They have learnt to organize their communal leisure—their writ does not run in the classroom; and whether they paint, act, or play games, they need a society, a president and a committee to do it. The artists seem particularly exposed to communal criticism; and the style of the book is so quintessentially small-boy that only the defaulters exhibit any individuality whatsoever. There is, one notes, a chapel—and hearty hymns are popular. But the tribal passion seems to have ousted the Christian one.

H. P. E.

Makers of Ships

In these days of national air-mindedness it is well that the public should be reminded that British trade is still, and is likely to continue to be, mainly carried on by sea. Mr. GEORGE BLAKE's all too brief survey of the history of *British Ships and Shipbuilders*, in Messrs. COLLINS' "Britain

in Pictures" series (4/6), has therefore a special timelessness, rendered even more topical by the return of the sister "Queens" to the Atlantic Ferry after their years of war service. Mr. BLAKE traces the development of British shipping from its beginnings to the present day, and although his heart, as becomes that of a patriotic Glaswegian, is obviously with the steamship, he does not grudge the sailing vessel her due in the evolution of what he aptly terms the "fifth sense" the man on the bridge has inherited from his forefathers of the days of "stick and string." It is, however, hardly correct to dismiss the *Cutty Sark* as "a slight disappointment as a clipper." Her fame, when every discount has been allowed for her sentimental aura, rests on the solid evidence of her own logs. Nor did the clipper ship—as Mr. BLAKE seems to imply—go out with the China tea races. Clipper ships, that is, ships designed for speed, continued to be built for the Australian trade right into the eighteen-seventies. Mr. BLAKE's book is one which—with its admirably-chosen illustrations—should go far to dispel the surprising lack of knowledge of what he rightly terms "our most important tradesmen," still existing, after two wars at sea, among our island people.

C. F. S.

More News from Borley

In *The Most Haunted House in England* Mr. HARRY PRICE gave the extraordinary story of his investigations, assisted by a large body of independent observers, of the phenomena at Borley Rectory (in Suffolk); and now in *The End of Borley Rectory* (HARRAP, 15/-) he tells of further developments in the case between 1939, when fire partially wrecked the building, and the latest news of a cottage being built on its site. A group of fifty-eight Cambridge scientists kept the rectory under observation during five of these years. They were subjected to the usual goings-on, and they made the interesting discovery that the famous "cold spot" on the landing, noticed by so many observers, was eleven degrees colder than the surrounding atmosphere. Encouraged by some remarkable deductions by Canon Phythian-Adams, Mr. PRICE decided to dig in the cellar, and here, just where he had been led to expect, he came on human remains. About these there are two theories: one that the victim was Arabella Waldegrave, a grand-daughter of James II, a nun murdered for espionage; and the other that she was a nun called Marie Lairre, who came from a Benedictine house in Havre and was murdered by her lover, a young Waldegrave, in 1667. From the solid arguments put forward by Canon Phythian-Adams the second is the more attractive. It is supported by psychic evidence—questionable, obviously, but none the less astonishing in its entirety—obtained through the planchette. Whatever one may feel about these theories, fully discussed in this book, it is very hard indeed to remain sceptical of the facts of the haunting after reading the first-hand evidence of so many sensible people (including Dr. Joad), fifteen of whom claim to have seen the nun. Borley is already the classic poltergeist case. But even at the beginning of the period under review the phenomena were weakening. Will they recur?

E. O. D. K.

The Unconquerable

Miss DOROTHY HOOD's book, *London is Invincible* (HUTCHINSON, 21/-), is not one to be devoured (as it must be by a reviewer) in a few sittings, but to be sampled and savoured and kept handy for happy reference. Its theme is in the title, but the author, whose power of collection and selection is astonishing, does not content herself with reviewing the city's recent powers of

recovery: she also shows how time and again men have restored what other men and time and fire have ravaged. We are shown Pepys "poking his nose into everything he could," and there are many enchanting quotations from the historian Stow, whom the author evidently loves much more, since she describes Pepys as "a rather pushful little man." Some of the best of the crowded pages describe the rises and the falls of Westminster, beginning with the time when the Danes ravaged its small predecessor and ending with the late war damage to the precincts. Practically the whole of London is included in her commentary, which is written briskly and lovingly, is livened by anecdote and a rather tart philosophy. This is a really valuable addition to the history of our capital.

B. E. B.

If All the Seas Were Ink!

Those who can remember the days when geography, as we knew it, concerned itself chiefly with capitals and rivers and such striking facts as "India exports indigo," will find Mr. F. KINGDON WARD's new book *About this Earth* (CAPE, 7/6) refreshingly cosmic in its scope. Its sub-title is "An Introduction to the Science of Geography," and that very well describes it. The author makes nothing of a few thousand million years. He takes the globe, with its three shells, atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, in his stride, giving us a general picture of it as though he were a learned and extraordinarily competent brand of Ariel; gives us the depth of the sea or the height of the tree-line in mere everyday feet; but indulges in the most thrilling speculations as to what might have happened if there had been no land or if what land there is (and he makes it sound precariously little) had been differently distributed. He has a final chapter on our new and far from house-trained djinn, atomic energy: he thinks it unlikely that it could be used to increase rainfall, though it might alter its incidence and change the geography of earth in a minor manner by the improvement of rivers and harbours. An interesting thing about this book is the fact that, endeavour as the author does, and with magnificent success, to take a world-wide view of his subject, his own travels as a botanist and his own affection for his lovely quarry keep breaking through.

B. E. S.



"Not vertical? Rubbish, it's MORE than vertical."



"Hurry!"

Radio Activity

or Tweet, Squeech-Ha and Flub

ALTHOUGH the names of Harblow and Tumpin were right at the top of the list in various wireless examinations during our military career, we seem to have emerged with completely different attitudes to civilian radio sets. To me it already seems like a fantastic dream that I should have been able to discourse casually about the variable-mu tetrode, skip distance and negative feedback. What on *earth* was negative feedback,

I wonder? And Quiescent Push-Pull? The brief period when Quiescent Push-Pull had any technical meaning for me is now over, and I have returned to my original first impression—a vague picture of two men in some fatal garden, heavy with a drowsy odour which means death if they succumb to it; they know this, and to resist the subtle poison they start sawing logs with a crosscut saw. But even as they push and pull a numbness steals over

their limbs, their sawing becomes more lethargic, more quiescent . . .

Harblow, on the other hand, is gradually alienating all his friends by fixing their radios for them. He will interrupt a perfectly good concert or existentialist play by saying "There's something wrong with your AVC line, old man," or, if he can't find anything actually wrong, he will say to those of his friends who have sets with twin speakers "Ah, I see you have a woofer and a tweeter," and then sit back with the air of one about to be crowned with garlands by young maidens.

I did, however, think he would lay off radiograms. I often feel that the radio manufacturers have turned with relief to peace-time radiograms after being compelled, probably by some Defence Regulation, to reveal the secrets of their mystery or craft to the public in Army sets. You can at least get to the inside of an Army set. You undo four screws, and there you are. This is the output triode, this is—well—er—another triode. Quite possibly with negative feedback. It is, as everybody knows, quite different with radiograms. With some you can get the turntable off, with others you can't (except by using such force that you are afraid that half the set will come out in appalling umbilical attachment to it). That is all. There is something very daunting about that flat plate with the dials at the top of a radiogram.

As luck would have it, the night Harblow came round my radiogram started making a noise like a grasshopper. There it was, as soon as I put on my new Brahms—tweet, tweet, tweet. Or, perhaps, more squeech-ha, squeech-ha, squeech-ha.

"It's only a mechanical fault," said Harblow. "Something is catching on the turntable." When he says things like that an A.M.I.E.E. couldn't argue with him.

My turntable is held on to the spindle by a spring-clip. The tension in that tiny bit of steel is fantastic. It is strong enough to drive Big Ben. We tried with our finger-nails. We tried with a screwdriver. It kept slipping round, largely because my radiogram is in a dark corner and we couldn't see what we were doing. While I was lighting a candle Harblow suddenly said "Got it!" There was a sharp pinging noise from the ceiling. When I came back from my fruitless candlelit search in all the other dark corners he was staring at the devilish arrangement of arms and levers now obscenely revealed like a bone sticking out of flesh. One of the big arms had another little arm fixed to its end with springs,

and this little arm sort of engaged with the little arm on the other big arm, if you follow me, and when the needle got to the middle of the record there was a loud click and all the arms jumped into a new position with such speed that one couldn't possibly see how it had happened.

"Now," said Harblow, "it stands to reason that if something is catching on the turntable it must be the thing that is sticking up highest here. I think we should press this thing down."

He did. Immediately the arms clicked into an entirely new position and the motor started making a rhythmic flubbing sort of noise.

"It probably always makes that noise with the turntable off," said Harblow. "Let's put it back and see."

I shudder to think of the permutations and combinations of those arms which we tried before we *did* get it back. I shouldn't have been in the least surprised if the record had gone round backwards, or if the spindle had gradually risen out of the machine like some awful sunflower. But eventually we got it so that the turntable *would* turn if one pressed down hard on the spindle—not *too* hard, otherwise the spindle went round without turning anything except itself. Breathlessly we put on a Mozart record. It was rather eerie. The squeech-ha had gone, as Harblow triumphantly pointed out; but the flubbing noise was still there, now more muffled and sinister. The violins played in a brilliant rococo drawing-room, and outside a nameless Frankenstein prowled up and down in the dark—flub, flub, flub. In the *allegro* It withdrew a little, but you knew It was waiting there, up on the moors. In the *adagio* It came down the hill, past the bolted doors of the cottages. Flub, flub, FLUB...

We didn't get to playing the Brahms after all. For one thing it is rather a long symphony and it gets a bit tiring exerting just the right pressure on the spindle. One's finger gets hot. (Harblow talks of making a conical lead thing whose hollowed point will bring just the right weight to bear. I must take it to a man before he carries out this threat.)

And for another thing, does anyone know how to get candle-grease off gramophone records?

"It was in the early '80s; I was a callow schoolboy of 13, and my parents, both fond of the theatre, allowed me twice in one week to see Sullivan in 'Richard III.' as Hamlet."—Letter to editor of Sunday paper.

A sight for sore eyes, by George!

Book I. Ode XXXIX

(To Johannes Faber)

WHETHER by work you pile up
cash
And fill your purse from day
to day,
Or, sitting where the sodas splash,
You let it come the easier way,

Receiving from some company
At Michaelmas your dividend;
For all your wealth, whate'er it be,
Waits one inevitable end.

Lo, in the House of Somerset
One sits and hears the coins fall
With ear that hath not ever yet
Missed one small item of them all,

Nor ever let a penny pass.
No furry lynx has sharper ear.
His hands are bronze, his nails are
brass,
And he has never shed a tear.

And so, my friend, why toil to heap
A pound upon another pound?
Behold the tax-collector leap
Towards you like an eager hound.

What shall it profit you to earn
A competence to keep you warm?
Which all too soon, too soon, will
turn
To figures filling up a form. ANON.



"Arbuthnot spent a couple of months in India and doesn't let you forget it for one minute."

Gifts

GRADUALLY the photographs and snapshots that I accumulated during the war have either been jettisoned or framed and stuck up on the walls of the room where I work. Fierce-looking British sergeants and fiercer-looking Kugomba privates and corporals glare down upon me as I pursue my peaceful labours. Even a mild brigadier seems to bless me with a glance from his rather bulbous eyes.

Only one photograph has neither been jettisoned nor hung. It is one of those enormously wide photographs which schools and battalions are so fond of foisting on their members. This particular exhibit is ten inches high and four feet in width, and it contains the faces of seven hundred Kugombas and about twenty Englishmen. The latter sit in a neat row in the front of the picture, and very notable is the military bearing of the two end ones, Captain Conkleshill and Captain Sympson. Personally I think it is one of the best likenesses of myself that the camera has ever caught, and even Sympson looks fairly well, although I attribute this mostly to the fact that he comes out very small and his face is an indistinct blur.

I have often meant to have this picture framed, but the problem of where to hang it has made me put off the task, and so the photograph, rolled up, has languished at the back of one of the drawers of my desk. In

some mysterious way it has constantly unrolled itself when the drawer was closed and prevented the drawer opening again. On three occasions I have had to unscrew the back of the desk to get the drawer open, and last time this happened I decided that the picture must either be framed or jettisoned.

"You can't throw it away," said Edith. "It would be disloyal to the men who served you so well. And you can't hang it anywhere if you have it framed, because it is too big. So why not have it framed and give it to Sympson? We owe him something in return for the collapsible Damascus inlaid card-table which he gave us last June, and which has already brought disaster to two tea-parties owing to the peculiar shape of the legs."

This seemed an excellent way out of the difficulty, so I took the picture to our local frame-maker.

"I can do it," he said, "if you can reconcile your conscience to absorbing such huge quantities of timber and glass when so many people are homeless owing to the shortage of materials."

Normally my conscience is extremely active where the commonweal is concerned, but I could not face the idea of taking the unframed picture back home and putting it into the drawer, knowing that before I could get the drawer open again I should have to unscrew the back of the desk for the fourth time.

"Go ahead with it," I said ruthlessly. "If Bevan really wants the materials for building, I can't see why they are lying idle in your shop."

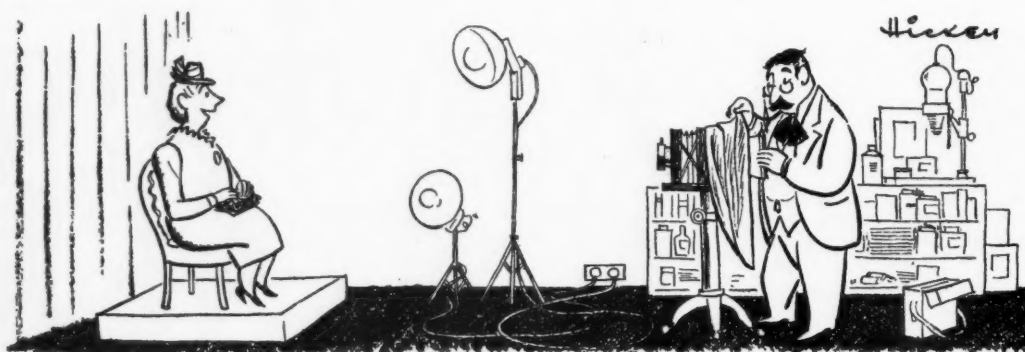
The frame-maker, who is a leading light in our local Communist Party, muttered something under his breath about Karl Marx which I affected not to hear, and promised that the picture would be ready in a fortnight.

"I don't suppose you can deliver it for me," I said humbly, "but if you should be able to do so, kindly take it to Captain Oscar Sympson, Channel View. I'll give you a note to put inside the parcel."

I thought this was the best plan, because if I had offered it to Sympson personally he might have found a graceful way of not accepting it. Three weeks later I met him in the street and he thanked me for the gift, though, I thought, not very heartily.

"Awfully good of you," he said, "but I really can't keep accepting presents from you without retaliating, so you'll find my own little gift waiting for you when you get home."

We did. At first we thought it was the Kugomba picture back again, but this one was two inches higher and a foot wider. I have often thought that one of the great faults of our public schools is that they are too large. Sympson had dug out an ancient group of Wimburians, with himself and myself in the back row, taken on Speech Day, 1919.



"Can I look unpleasant again?"

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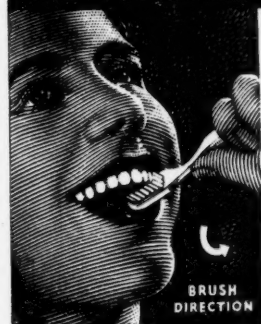
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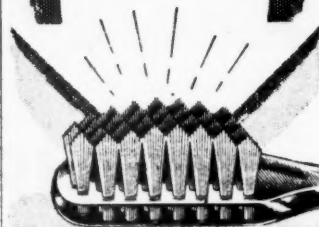
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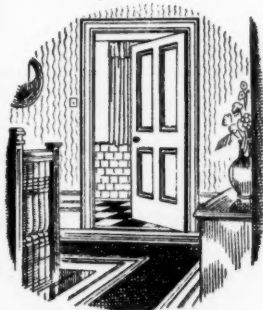
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RHEUMATISM

Rheumatism—however mild your symptoms—exacts a merciless toll in pain and expense if not checked in time. Poisons and impurities in your system are usually the cause of rheumatic disorders. To get rid of these poisons, doctors recommend the drinking of mineral spa waters. But a visit to a spa involves time and expense that many people simply cannot afford these days.

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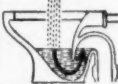
A bottle of 'Alkia' Saltrates costs 3/9 (inc. Purchase Tax). Get one from your chemist to-day and begin your spa treatment to-morrow morning.



The room that housewives are so particular about

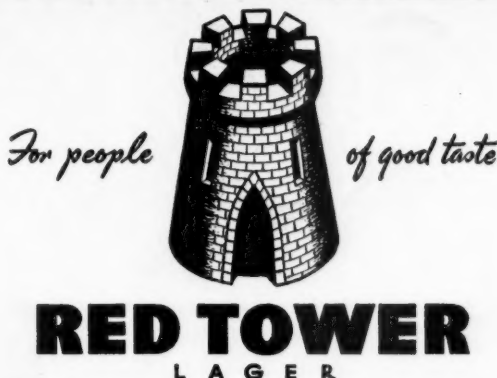
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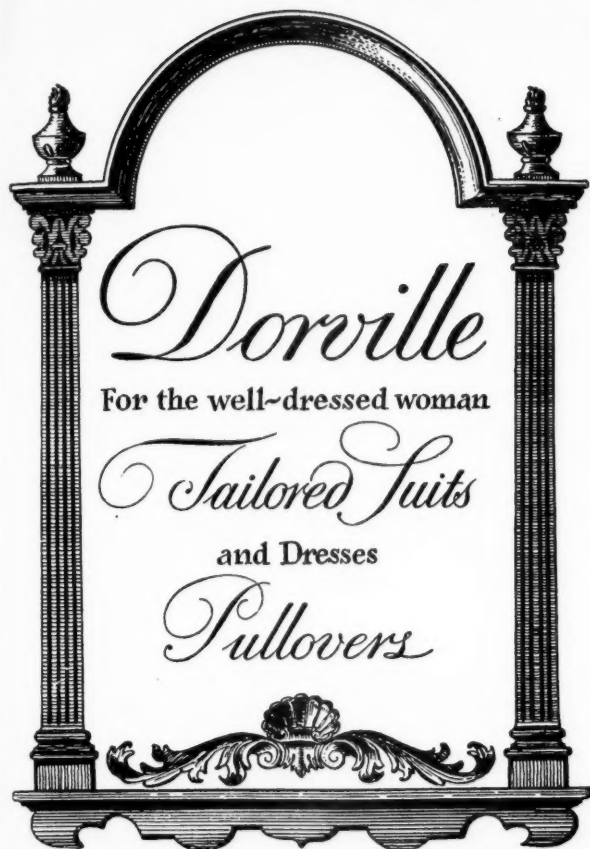


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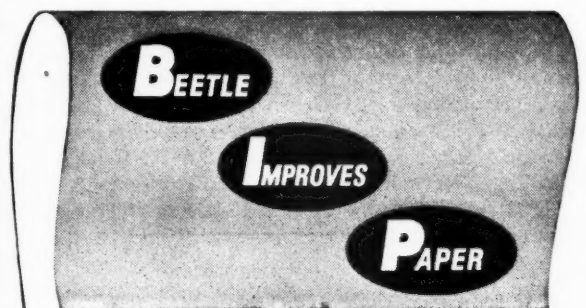
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For twenty years, paper pulp has been used as the filler for Beetle moulding powders in translucent colours.

Now plastics return the compliment, and paper-makers process their pulp with Beetle Resin to get paper which has a high strength when it is wet.

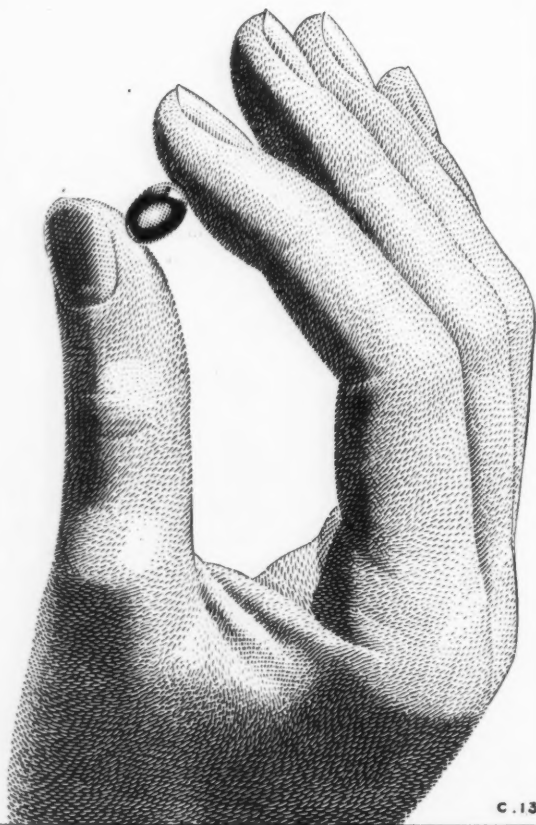
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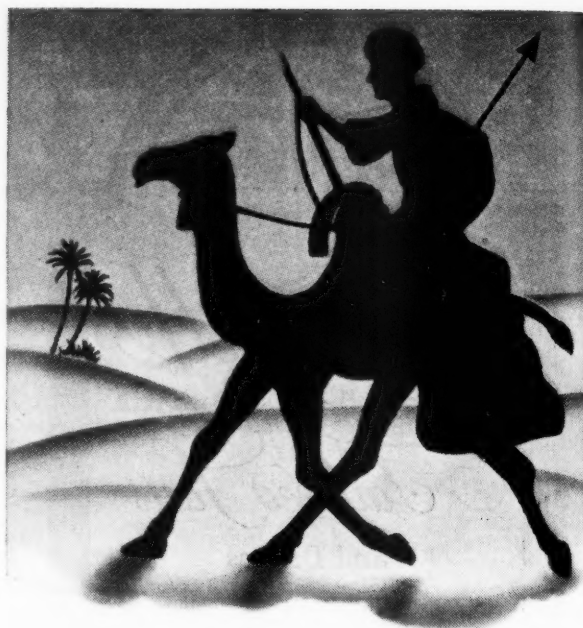
Your health this winter will largely depend upon your body's supply of those two essential vitamins, A and D. Start taking them at once in their concentrated form in Crookes Halibut Oil. This precaution will pay you handsomely by helping to ward off colds and influenza.



CROOKES HALIBUT OIL

OBTAINABLE ONLY FROM CHEMISTS

Capsules, per bottle of 25, 2/6; 100, 8/6
Liquid, per phial, enough for 16 days 2/-



"Another Bouquet for Barneys"

(All Smokers' letters can be verified at
Barneys Bureau, 24, Holborn, London, E.C.1.)

March 12, 1946

Dear Sirs,

Another bouquet for Barneys, though you must have enough in all conscience! This time it comes from the focal point of Africa. Indeed I am wondering if it came from the East or the West, for the Atlantic and the Red Sea are about equidistant from here. Anyway, there it was in a native store in of all places. A tin of genuine Barneys. I had been trekking for three and a half weeks with my Company of Sudanese Mounted Infantry of the Western Arab Corps. For the last ten days I had been tobacco-less. My first taste of this ambrosial stuff will remain one of the unforgettable experiences of my life. For it was in perfect condition: and so was I, after a fairly rigorous patrol over the waterless savannah of What a smoke!

Use this of course if you like. The tobacco deserves all the boost it rightly gets.

— Bimbashi,
S.D.F. M.E.F.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN SINCLAIR'S
Barneys

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Barneys (medium), Punchbowl (full), Parsons Pleasure (mild),
2/10½d. oz.

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